TWIN ATLANTIC

THEIR HOMECOMING REVIEWED!

AMITY AFFLICTION

WHY DID THEY SLEEP IN A BIN?

KERRANG!

10 KICK-ASS POSTERS

TONIGHT ALIVE

JENNA'S MOST EMOTIONAL INTERVIEW EVER...

60 NEW BANDS TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE!

GIVE YOUR MUSIC TASTE A TRANSFUSION!

89 HUGE TOURS LISTED

YOU ME AT SIX

INTERVIEWED BY YOU!

THE BIG INTERVIEW

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YOU WON'T BELIEVE WHAT THEY'VE GOT IN STORE FOR 2017...

KERRANG! ISSUE NO 1652

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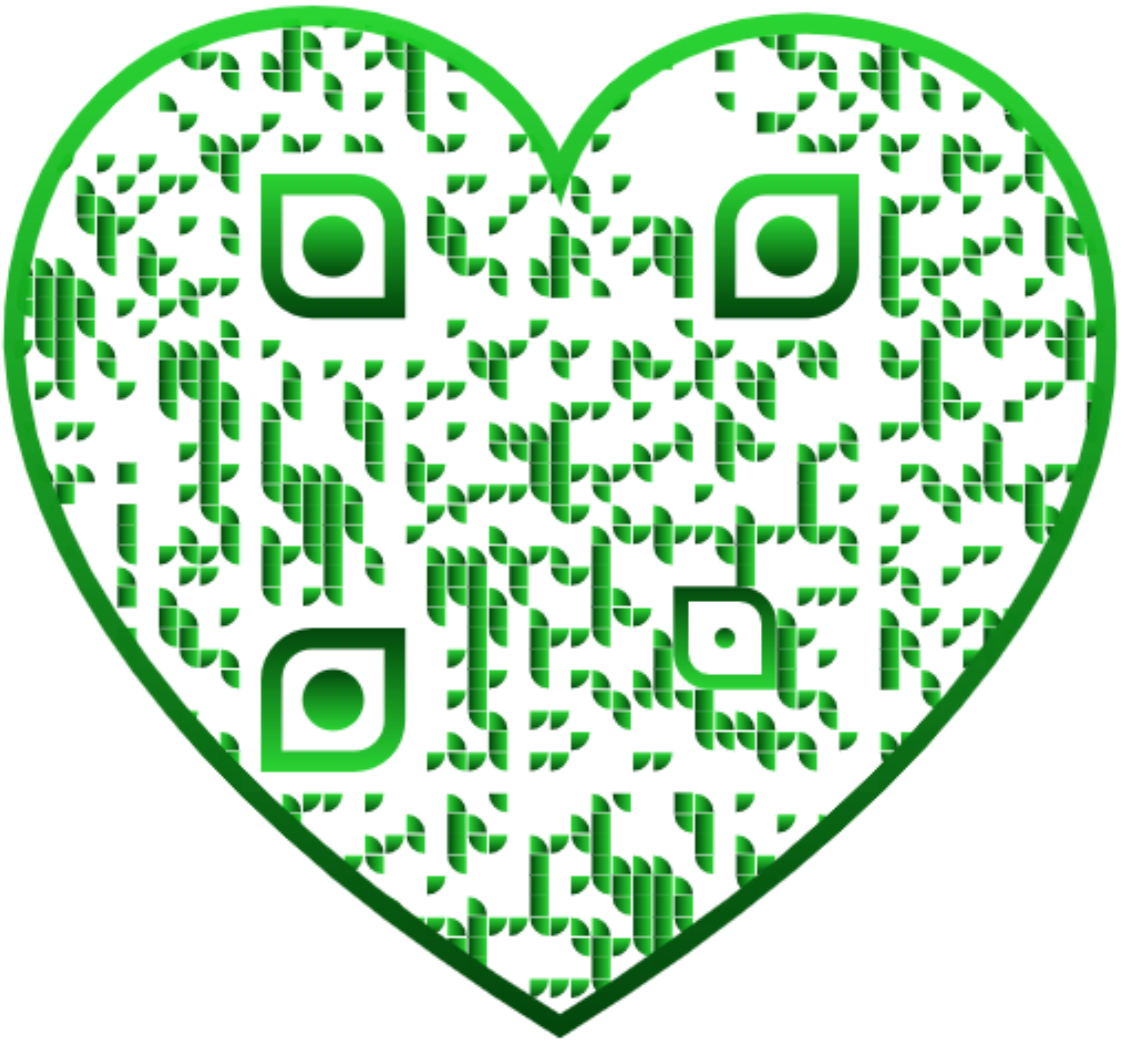

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CONTENTS

ISSUE 1652 JAN 07, 2017

HELLO READERS, and welcome to the first Kerrang! of 2017. It's time to shake off the haze of Christmas, nullify your New Year's hangover with an Ibuprofen or two and get stuck right in to your year in rock. Because it's going to be amazing! I can think of no better place to start than on p12 with Emily Carter's enlightening sit down with Avenged Sevenfold (reinventing live performance in arenas this week!), before moving onto our epic rundown of the 60 most exciting new bands in rock on p21. If you thought that was good, wait until we see what we've got in store for you next week. Enjoy the issue!

James

NEWS

ON THE COVER:

Tonight Alive's **Jenna McDougall** reveals all about her band's future, and her new hair **(p4)**. Plus, **The Kenneths** explain how to drum with a broken foot **(p6)**.

FEATURES

ON THE COVER:

Avenged Sevenfold take us inside their boldest vision yet, as their 2017 kicks off with The Stage coming to life across the UK **(p12)**. Elsewhere, if you came into the New Year with a resolution to find your new favourite band, you'll be wanting our **Fresh Blood 2017** special – you've 60 of the best new acts to choose from **(p21)**! And atop that, we let *you* grill **You Me At Six (p44)**!

LIVES

ON THE COVER: THREE nights out with **Twin Atlantic**!? That's what we did. The band looked very tired by the end of it **(p46)**. Keeping it Scottish, we caught up with **Biffy Clyro** at the O2 Arena **(p48)**, before big nights with **Against Me! (p50)** and **Beartooth (p51)**! So everyone's tired!

REVIEWS

Who's back? Fuckin' **AFI** are back, with their best album in years **(p52)**! And on a n00b front, there's the killer new album from Scouse pop-punks **WSTR (p53)**. And then we've got **A Day To Remember** telling us how they made a classic on a bus **(p55)**!

GIGS

Meshuggah prepare to bring a barrel of mighty riffs to the UK **(p56)**, while we head to the land of the Geordies to find out about **Think Tank? (p58)**.

COVER PHOTO: ANDY FORD. CONTENTS PHOTO: STEPHEN KYLE

TWIN ATLANTIC! p46

The builders left their spirit level at home when they were constructing the Barras…

MELT YOUR WALL! p26

10 amazing posters!

A CLOSE SHAVE

NEXT WEEK WE'RE BRINGING YOU SOME HUGE EXCLUSIVE **TONIGHT ALIVE** NEWS. BEFORE THAT, HOWEVER, LET'S CATCH UP WITH **JENNA McDOUGALL**. SHE'S UNDERGONE QUITE THE TRANSFORMATION SINCE WE LAST SPOKE…

TONIGHT ALIVE'S 2016 release Limitless was a divisive record. We were expecting more of the euphoric pop-punk that made-up 2013's The Other Side. What we got was a pop record that fans either loved or hated. But whatever you made of that album, the takeaway was that singer Jenna McDougall – who'd discussed frankly her emotions and struggles in these pages in the years preceding – unquestionably seemed happier than we'd ever seen her before. This was beautiful to see. This, Jenna puts down to a spiritual awakening, which in turn part freed up her band's musical potential. Turns out they've been writing their follow-up to Limitless. Let's chat…

SO YOU'VE BEEN WRITING FOR THE FOLLOW-UP TO LIMITLESS? WHAT'S THE DIRECTION GOING TO BE?

"It's really just to surrender to the music and surrender to the creation. In Limitless we were making the request to be free and that was the growing pains of that and I think in many ways that those songs reflect the breaking-free process – but I don't think we really know what we're capable of beyond that. For me, I'm trying to counteract my fears. The reason I shaved my head was because I was so attached to my image. I can only look forward to where our songs are going to evolve. Because every two months we're different people, every two months we're more evolved and more excited about life…"

YOU'VE TALKED OF A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY. HOW HAS THAT AFFECTED TOUR LIFE?

"This world is all I have and all I know so it's definitely an integrating process and it has to find harmony with what I do. For me that meant letting go of a lot of the things that weren't serving me anymore, a lot of our life is spent in the dark on tour, we're inside venues and shows happen at night and that's the most active and stimulating time of your day, so naturally your energy is in that space, y'know?"

YOU STOPPED DRINKING, TOO…

"I haven't really been a drinker for four years and I've stopped going to bars even though it's a social place for people on tour. It's just not a place that's serving me anymore. It might sound strange to some people but quiet time is not something I have much of so I have to make time for it. It's just about tuning in for me – thinking, 'What do I need right now?' Not everyone's going to understand that but I'm very supported by the guys and we have great relationships. Our bus is always a peaceful place and if partying happens to go on, it's always in the background behind a closed door. Everyone's very respectful of each other. For the most part we're really mellow people."

> ***"NOTHING IS REALLY AN ACCIDENT…"***
> **JENNA McDOUGALL**

HAS BEING ON THE ROAD FOR SO LONG HELPED THIS SPIRITUAL JOURNEY?

"I think it'd be unfair to think that it didn't because this is my path and a lot of the people who've affected my journey I met on the road and by chance and by accident. Although nothing is really an accident. I've opened myself up to synchronicity more and it's shined its way into my life. Although there's certainly less time to practice spirituality or to read or think or have time out, which means that if you want to do those things you have to make time for it. It has to be so important to you to fit into your life when you're on the road. I'm thankful for that circumstance because it's forced it to the foreground of my life otherwise it wouldn't exist. That's how it is in our world, it's all or nothing."

HOW DO YOU THINK THE DOOM AND GLOOM OF 2016 PLAYS INTO THAT?

"Well, Hindus believe that Kali is the goddess of destruction. In her picture, on the one hand, she has a knife, a dagger, and on the other she's giving birth through her hand. She wears a necklace of gold. She means destruction has to happen for rebirth. It kinda makes sense when you see what happens in the media and people taking their lives. There's so much suffering and disease and corruption and all these things are a part of our reality and the vibration we're on right now. There's so much pain and dissolution around us all the time. One by one we all start waking up. The more we tune into our frequency and realise we're not satisfied and compliant with this world we become healers. Even gurus say 'I know nothing' and put their hands in the air because they honestly think they know nothing compared to how much there is to know…"

THIS NEW RECORD COULD BE REALLY IMPORTANT IF IT ENCOURAGES PEOPLE TO THINK AND FEEL MORE…

"I'm excited that you said that because it makes me want to encourage people to keep paying attention to their thoughts and intuitions and keep researching and wanting to know more, because it's going to strengthen the collective. That's really important right now because there are so many people who are just asleep. In all kinds of religions, they believe that feminine energy is what is going to heal the world – femininity in men as well – and that's really just about connecting with Mother Earth and tuning back into what the world needs…"

*Come back next week for a massive **Tonight Alive** exclusive!*

WORDS: HANNAH EWENS **PHOTO:** ADAM ELMAKIAS

THE BIG STORY

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING EVER

Jenna's hairstyle can go anywhere from here – you could say her options are LIMITLESS

The Kenneths: big things are afoot, they're going to break 2017 etc. etc. etc.

KEN AGH-LOW!

THIS IS ABOUT THE DRUMMER FROM ACE NEW PUNK BAND **THE KENNETHS** BREAKING HER FOOT. SO IT ACTUALLY HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH CORRIE…

FEET ARE pretty essential if you're a drummer. So pity poor Aicha Djidjelli from The Kenneths, who broke her foot on tour late last year, yet still continued with her duties using a combination of innovation and pure punk grit. Let's catch up with her to see what happened…

LAST YEAR YOU FINISHED A TOUR AS A DRUMMER WITH A BROKEN FOOT. WHAT HAPPENED THERE, THEN?

AICHA: "It happened after a night out in Glasgow. We'd been out on the town singing karaoke – a great version of Bohemian Rhapsody was sung! – and back at the hotel, getting out of the lift, Josh [Weller, vocals/guitar] slid across the hallway carpet. I was going to do the same, but just as I lifted my leg Lewis [Maynard, bass] tripped me up and immediately I thought, 'Ouch, that really hurts.' I went to bed but woke up twice in excruciating pain. It wasn't swollen, so of course they were both telling me that there wasn't anything really wrong. But the next day in Manchester I went to A&E and after waiting for hours I found out that I'd broken one of my toes as well as a bone in my right foot."

OBVIOUSLY FOR A DRUMMER, A BROKEN FOOT IS A PROBLEM. WHAT DID YOU DO?

"I was gutted. I felt like someone who was about to fuck but had lost their hard-on. The tour [with Yellowcard] was great, so I didn't want to leave. I thought, 'Well if I turn the bass drum on its side, I could play those parts with my right hand.' I was in the dressing room in Manchester 30 minutes before we played, frantically trying to play the drum parts that way! Funnily enough, the show was great; I don't think the people in the audience who don't play drums could really tell the difference. In fact, when my foot does heal I'll probably incorporate some of the way I'm playing now into my normal technique!"

YOU'LL WANT TO GET 2017 OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT THOUGH (SORRY!). WHAT DO THE KENNETHS HAVE PLANNED FOR THIS YEAR?

"Well, we've got a headline tour in February [TBC], so we're looking forward to that. But the thing that I'd really like to do is record an album. I think that EPs are a bit of a cop-out because there's no pressure on you with an EP. But an album is different. It's a proper statement of intent; it's more of a commitment to the music. So that's what I'm going to fight for. We've written about 35 songs – actually, it's probably more than 35 songs – so we're not short of material. I think we should pick the best of those and just go and record an album."

MIGHT 2017 SEE YOU TOUR THE U.S.?

"Yeah, that'd be great, too. We actually have toured the States. We played on the Warped Tour in 2015, which was great, but it was really hard work. But it'd be fantastic to go back again and play different kinds of venues."

The Kenneths' *EP Double N is out now*

WORDS: IAN WINWOOD **PHOTOS:** FREDRIC JOHANSSON

NEVERMIND THE BEEF!

Sex Pistols frontman John Lydon has told Pitchfork that he's finally forgiven Nirvana for supposedly copying his band with their Nevermind album title, close to the Pistols seminal 1977 debut Never Mind The Bollocks Here's The Sex Pistols. "I remember being very angry at their album," he said. "Nevermind? Have you lost your bollocks or something? I have to say [now], Smells Like Teen Spirit is one of pop music's all-time greatest. That song is firmly embedded in my psyche."

HOW MUCH IS A FLIGHT TO CHICAGO?

This is exciting news – Alkaline Trio have announced a, um, trio of shows in their hometown of Chicago this month, on the 18, 19 and 20th – their first live performances since March 2016. There's also some news about the forthcoming ninth Alkaline Trio record, which Matt Skiba remains committed to, despite his new-ish role as blink-182's new-ish guitar player and vocalist. "I'll be writing for a new Alkaline Trio record while on this [blink] tour," he said. "So once things with blink cool down a bit, the Trio can go in and make a new record and start touring again while blink is on break."

K!ONFIDENTIAL

ROCK GOSSIP AND GIBBERISH

A NEW MOPE

WE'VE ALL BEEN LOVING ROGUE ONE, YES? WELL, IN CELEBRATION OF SUCH AN AWESOME ADDITION TO THE STAR WARS CANON, HERE'S THE BEST-EVER TWEETS FROM OUR FAVOURITE SAD-EYED ASPIRING SITH LORD, @KYLOR3N!

"'WE LOST OUR SON FOREVER'. DAD, WE'RE AT THE GROCERY. I'M LITERALLY RIGHT BEHIND YOU"

"Dear diary, today I figured out a way to put headphones into my helmet. I have often felt my life deserves a soundtrack"

"I'm so stressed I feel like the walls are closing in. Something just moved past my leg. Maybe I am in a trash compactor come to consider it"

"Dear diary, I was not appointed prom monarch. This should not affect me. I'm not even disappointed"

"UGH, THESE AREN'T DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR, DAD. MY GRANDEUR IS REAL"

"People act like my dad's not a pushover but Lando Calrissian has mispronounced his first name for YEARS and he's never even corrected him"

"KNOWING WHO YOUR PARENTS ARE IS OVERRATED"

"Dear diary, we're barbecuing with the Ewoks. I have a sunburn. I told my dad and he said 'No, *I* have a SONburn'. I'm going indoors forever"

"FIRST I WILL REUNITE MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE, NEXT THE EMPIRE"

NEWS

PHOTO: GETTY

CAUGHT IN A MOSH

Confirming that 2016 really was the worst 12 months ever, news reached us late last year that British Transport Police had arrested an unnamed 39-year-old man on suspicion of stealing around 20 mobile phones in the pit of Limp Bizkit and Korn's show at the Manchester Arena on December 12. In a report both funny and depressing, the suspect was found with tights on under his trousers, with phones stuffed down them, reports the Manchester Evening News. God, we're pleased 2016 is done. Let's take care of each other in 2017, you guys.

ROCKSTAR DOGS!

NAME: MIYUKI-CHAN
OWNER: MATT HEAFY, TRIVIUM

"Miyuki-chan is a hilarious dog; her antics always crack everyone up. She loves my bandmates, and is always the centre of attention at any gathering. She burps, snorts, farts, tries to talk, nibbles ears, kisses noses, and likes to sleep under blankets with her head on a pillow, like a person. I love this goof!"

PLUGS THAT LOOK LIKE ROCKSTARS

SPOTTED

Frank Turner using Kerrang!'s local Wetherspoons as a "thoroughfare" ❱ *Counterfeit and Happy Accidents at the Kerrang! Kerristmas party* ❱ The You Me At Six lads at Limp Bizkit/Korn's Now That's What I Call Nu-Metal roadshow at the SSE Arena, Wembley ❱ *Lars Frederiksen at Sheer Terror's show at the Underworld* ❱ Mark Hoppus and his son getting a selfie on the Thames… *SEEN A ROCKSTAR DOING SOMETHING? TELL US AT FEEDBACK@*

PANDORA BY RAY ZELL Rayzell.com

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THE OFFICIAL KERRANG! ROCK CHART

BIFFY CLYRO HAVE, ERRR, RE-ARRANGED THE KERRANG! ROCK CHART. BUT THE RETURN OF **WATERPARKS** AND **WHILE SHE SLEEPS** COULD CHANGE IT ALL NEXT WEEK!

	WEEKS ON CHART	HIGHEST POSITION	ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL
1	3	1	BIFFY CLYRO	Re-arrange	14TH FLOOR
2	5	2	MALLORY KNOX	Giving It Up	SONY
3	5	3	GREEN DAY	Still Breathing	REPRISE
4	7	1	BMTH	Oh No	SONY
5	2	5	LOWER THAN ATLANTIS	Had Enough	EASY LIFE
6	2	6	YOU ME AT SIX	Swear	BMG
7	3	7	KORN	Take Me	ROADRUNNER
8	10	2	CREEPER	Suzanne	ROADRUNNER
9	14	2	ADTR	Naivety	ADTR RECORDS
10	10	5	ENTER SHIKARI	Hoodwinker	PLAY IT AGAIN SAM
11	8	6	METALLICA	Moth Into Flame	BLACKENED RECORDINGS
12	7	6	DEAF HAVANA	Trigger	SO RECORDINGS
13	12	10	KINGS OF LEON	Waste A Moment	RCA
14	8	13	PROPHETS OF RAGE	Prophets Of Rage	PROPHETS OF RAGE
15	14	1	YOU ME AT SIX	Night People	BMG
16	10	3	AIRBOURNE	Rivalry	SPINEFARM
17	1	17	WHILE SHE SLEEPS	Hurricane	WHILE SHE SLEEPS
18	2	18	WATERPARKS	Stupid For You	EQUAL VISION
19	6	6	FRANK CARTER & THE RATTLESNAKES	Lullaby	INTERNATIONAL DEATH CULT
20	2	18	FORT HOPE	Say No	VIRGIN EMI

LOZ TAYLOR, WHILE SHE SLEEPS

HEY, LOZ! ARE YOU FEELING STOKED TO BE BACK IN THE KERRANG! ROCK CHART?
"Really stoked to be a part of the chart. It's wicked that the guys at Kerrang! like the new song. We've had some great feedback from the song and video that was filmed in our new warehouse."

HOW DID HURRICANE COME ABOUT?
"It came about due to members of the band writing about personal experiences and ideologies forced upon them and others from the powers that be. It's crazy to watch the news these days and see what's going on in the world. It really feels like we are on the edge."

IS IT A SIGN OF THINGS TO COME FROM YOUR NEW ALBUM, YOU ARE WE?
"There's definitely elements in Hurricane that are incorporated into our new album. We are trying to oust our own musical boundaries. We never want to be a band who brings out the same album twice."

MIKE DUCE, LOWER THAN ATLANTIS

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU GOING INTO THIS NEW SAFE IN SOUND ALBUM CYCLE, MIKE?
"Very! I feel like that not only are we in the best place we've ever been musically, but also as human beings we're all on top form!"

HOW DID HAD ENOUGH COME ABOUT?
"I was having a shit day and couldn't be bothered to vocal an instrumental I had, and that's what came out! Quite funny thinking back, really."

ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS YEAR?
"Like you wouldn't believe! Bring it on!"

SEE/HEAR THE OFFICIAL KERRANG! ROCK CHART!

KERRANG! TV
KERRANG! RADIO

The Official Kerrang! Rock Chart is made up of airplay across Kerrang! Radio, Kerrang! TV and specialist rock stations. The show airs on K! Radio every Saturday at 10am with Loz Guest, and also on K! TV Thursdays at 4pm. Tune in and listen up!

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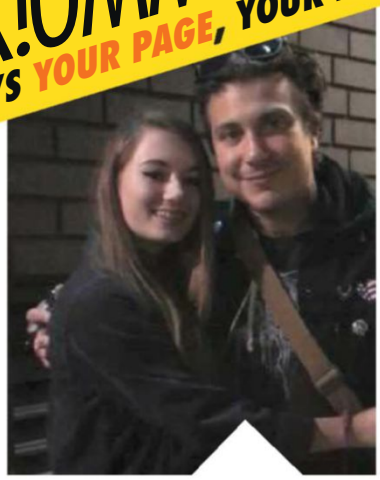


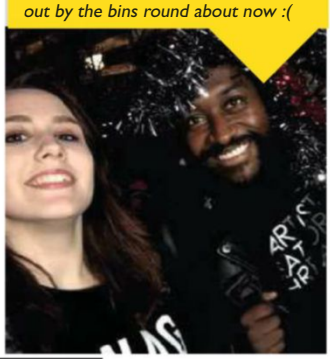
B.F.F.
"Throwback to when I met Frank Iero in Islington – he's such a sweet guy!" says ***@danko_angel****. Frank is such a sweet guy, isn't he? We hear he's actually capable of eating six boxes of Quality Street in one sitting. SIX!*

THIS AIN'T A HAT, IT'S A CONE
"I tried doing a pencil drawing of Patrick Stump… but his fedora looks like a cone," says ***@selinalovesbands****. Funny you should say that as we passed some roadworks this morning which were lined with P. Stump hats.*

WINNER!

PORTRAIT. ODD.
"It's a Brendon Urie!" tweeted ***@salmonweekes****. That it is! And it seems the Panic! At The Disco man has got his eyes on the gig tickets prize this week. Paws off, Brendon. How many times do we need to explain to you that you're not allowed to enter? FFS. Anyway, for this awesome art, you've won tickets to see Mallory Knox – plus a meet-and-greet with the band. Congrats!*

IF I'M THE TINSEL…
"I gave tinsel to letlive. and Creeper at PTV. This was the result," says ***@fvkilljoys****. There was us thinking you paid letlive. drummer Loniel Robinson to be your Christmas tree for the whole festive season. He'd be out by the bins round about now :(*



GIVE 'EM HELL, INK
"Another drawing for you guys at K! – just a reminder of one of the greatest bands who ever walked this world…" says ***@EmoJohnnieRAWR****. Excuse us, Emo Johnnie (if that's your REAL name)! We don't need a reminder of this fact. Our entire office is actually wallpapered with a repetitive pattern that reads 'MCR are one of the greatest bands who ever walked this world'. We bought it in Homebase if you want some for yourself.*

AN HONOURABLE MANE
"I met Bury Tomorrow this year and this happened…" says ***@Molly_Reeve_X****. We're not completely sure what's going on here, but last time we saw that bloody Davyd Winter-Bates he put his fingers in our mouth. And we may joke a lot on this page, but that actually happened. Ick.*

.SKETCHES.

"Weird lighting, so apologies if the hair looks really faded," says ***@littleblack-bookoftheheart****. And we must apologise to you, because we had to cut off one of the ghosts in your drawing to fit it in this box. Sometimes you suffer for art, sometimes the art suffers for itself. Or something like that.*

MEET-ADVENTURES

"Best night of my life!" says ***@barakatasht0n****. You've not actually specified why this was the best night of your life, Sophie. Did PTV gift you all with brand-new iPads after this was taken? And then take you for ice cream, and later to a karaoke bar where you sang pop-punk songs together? We hope so…*

FACE IN THE CROWD

IS THIS YOU?

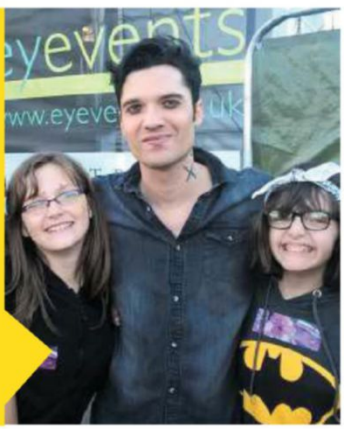
BAND: Biffy Clyro
WHEN: 08.12.16
WHERE: O2 Arena, London

■ HEY, THERE, girl in the pink top holding some random-looking stuff. Everyone's having fun in this picture, but you look like you're having the most fun. Yours is the kind of face people make when they're riding the Nemesis Inferno at Thorpe Park, not watching, albeit really good, bands play. So, to reward you for your facial efforts we're giving you a prize. Email a photo of you and proof of your Biffy ticket to feedback@kerrang.com – ***BECAUSE YOU'VE WON TICKETS TO SEE THE WONDER YEARS!***

SKETCHED OUT

"Heathens are slow – this drawing took me five hours!" reveals ***@GraceffaBubbles****. "Well worth it though." Definitely worth it! It seems as though the art took you so long that Josh Dun fancied a nap while you were drawing him. Which is fair enough – we'd get tired after five hours, too.*

IMPOST-NIAC



"This was in August – I'm the one on the far right," says ***Kerry Flood-Walsh****. "I met a Green Day tribute band!" We're glad you wrote that, Kerry, because we spent at least 45 minutes trying to figure out what band this guy was from, and wondering if we'd acquired some sort of head trauma. And then we read the email.*

VOLDEMORT (DID NOT DRAW THIS)

"Rough sketch of Jayden Seeley! Met him this year and seeing With Confidence again in Feb!" says ***Tay Bacon****. Jayden's so pensive-looking, Tay! Looks like he just thought up every track for their next album. Hope so…*

NEXT WEEK

WIN!

STATE CHAMPS MERCH AND TICKETS!

2017 is bringing about a whole load of new weird challenges for you guys, so let's get started, shall we? Here's what we're looking for from you this week… 1) The cover of our Album Of The Year 2016, Green Day's Revolution Radio, with milk on the radio instead of fire. 2) A selfie with You Me At Six where you're doing the Macarena (the more members taking part the better). 3) A photo of a piece of fruit that looks like Alex Gaskarth. Send your stuff to us using the hashtag **#Kommunity**, and you could win tickets to see **State Champs** on their upcoming UK tour, along with an awesome merch bundle!

TAG YOUR STUFF WITH #KOMMUNITY

*Show us via Twitter (**@KerrangMagazine**), Instagram (**kerrangmagazine_**) or **feedback@kerrang.com**!*

REINVENTIN

THE STAGE

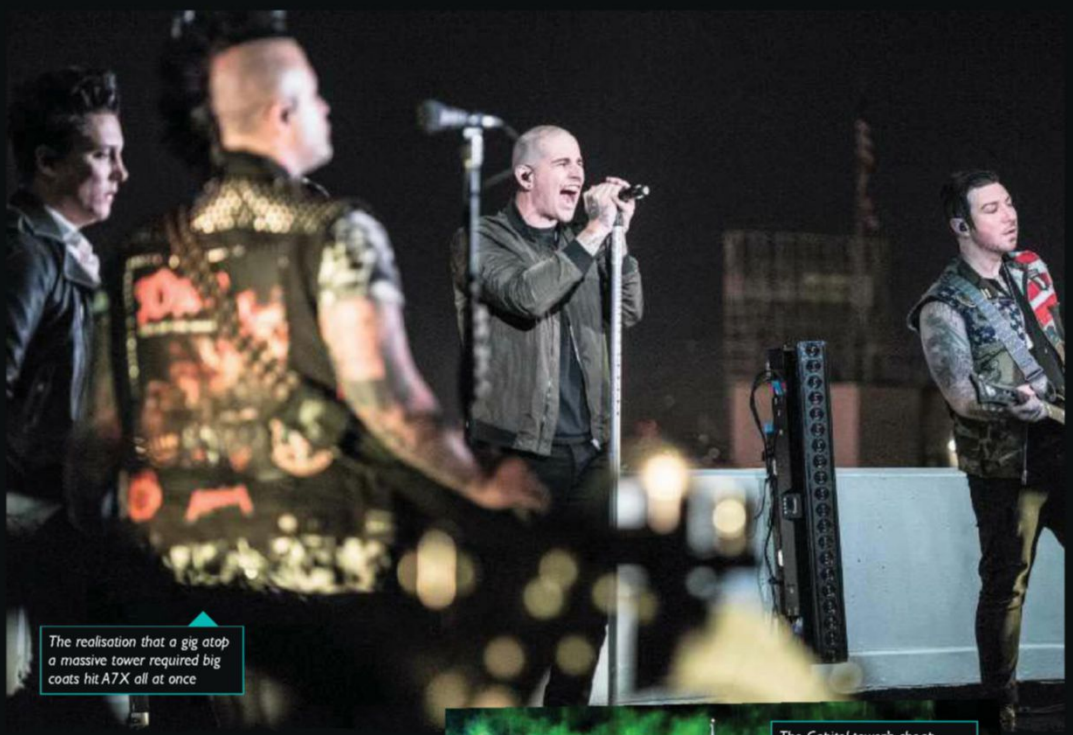
HOW DO YOU BRING YOUR MOST AMBITIOUS ALBUM EVER – ONE THAT TAKES IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, THE UNIVERSE AND MORE – TO LIFE? **AVENGED SEVENFOLD**'S WILDEST VISION IS COMING TO UK ARENAS THIS WEEK – AND YOU'VE NEVER SEEN *ANYTHING* LIKE IT…

WORDS: EMILY CARTER
PHOTOS: ANDY FORD, GRIZZLEE MARTIN, GETTY

Shrouded in smoke, a haunting image of a Deathbat appears. Video screens are twitching, as if the camera's signal is being interrupted by some great, unexplained force. The opening piano chimes to Nightmare ring out across the cool Californian sunset. Atop their new label's HQ, Avenged Sevenfold are engulfed by a world where planetary systems and lightning collide, and effects that wouldn't look out of place in Independence Day consume the sky around them.

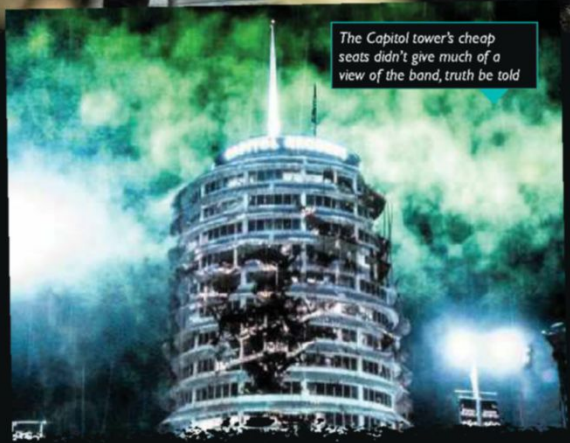
All the while, the band – frontman M. Shadows, guitarists Synyster Gates and Zacky Vengeance, bassist Johnny Christ and newly-appointed drummer Brooks Wackerman – look positively nonplussed about this impending end of the world. Instead, if these are to be their final moments on Earth, they're storming through Nightmare and the title-track of their new album, The Stage, as well as intense renditions of Planets and Acid Rain, in an unusually understated fashion.

The world as we know it may not be ending in this moment, but it's certainly changing. Using groundbreaking virtual reality technology to enhance fans' viewing experience online, for the first-ever 3D, 360-degree live-streamed performance, this is how Avenged Sevenfold unveiled their wildest and most ambitious era of



The realisation that a gig atop a massive tower required big coats hit A7X all at once

Virtual reality brings the show to life. And also makes you look a little silly



The Capitol tower's cheap seats didn't give much of a view of the band, truth be told

the band to the world back in October.

But what we were witnessing on that night wasn't simply the latest left-turn for a band who've helped redefine the sound and look of modern heavy metal since their inception in the closing moments of the 21st century. It wasn't just the showpiece unveiling, without a moment's warning, of their latest, 4K-rated album, either. Instead, it was a glimpse into the future of live music, where audiences aren't defined by geographical location, and production isn't limited to the stage. As Synyster Gates later tells us, feet back on the Californian ground, "There are so many incredible things to do and to be discovered."

This week, that journey of discovery arrives on British soil for Avenged Sevenfold's biggest-ever UK headline run. "Everything that we do at the show is going to be completely revamped and repackaged – we want it to be different from the ground up," grins frontman M. Shadows, a hint of cheekiness in his eyes as he fights the urge to completely spills the beans on Avenged Sevenfold's epic plans for their upcoming headline run this month. Bolstered by this innovative new way of thinking, the band making the trip across the pond this time around is a bolder, more powerful beast than before.

The nerves over making their step up to 'Festival Headliner' status two years ago, following their first-ever bill-topping slot at Download in 2014, have disappeared, too. While Avenged's Donington Park date saw fireworks fizzling off into the evening sky, relentless pyro warming the chilly English air and the type of production Iron Maiden or Metallica might envy, it appears as though A7X are leaving all of that behind in their latest chapter.

The band have learned a lot in the 17 years they've been on the road, and they're brimming with fresh ideas about how to make this their most exhilarating tour to date. And if people have got a problem with the surprises in store? "If you don't like it, then don't show up," M. laughs.

Fortunately, though, as Kerrang! are about to find out, this is one trip that's not to be missed. You can leave your minds alongside your coats in the cloakroom…

When it comes to their live experience, Avenged Sevenfold have never shied away from a spectacle. 2010/2011's Nightmare tour, in support of their fifth album of the same name, for instance, saw a man hanging himself onstage. The Hail To The King production that followed in 2013 and 2014 brought with it a colossal Deathbat 'King' guarding enormous castle walls. How, then, Avenged Sevenfold were to bring an album that explored notions of space and artificial intelligence to life, was a question integral to the new album's inception.

The grand plans that have gone into Avenged Sevenfold's arena trek were conceived a long, long time ago. "We've had these visions and inspirations for [this show] since before we even started sitting down and writing riffs," smiles Johnny Christ. From set designs to accompanying videos, to totally unique items of merch in pop-up shops, The Stage was, the band say, never intended to begin and end with the 73 minutes and 35 seconds of music committed to tape during their extensive and exhaustive work in the studio. A7X have put their all into making this latest embodiment limitless. And, rather than being overwhelmed by the challenge, the task of achieving such an enormous feat has been a thrill. Avenged Sevenfold's latest attempt at reinventing the wheel – both musically and in the live setting – has revived the band.

"WE HAD THE VISION FOR THIS SHOW BEFORE WE WROTE A RIFF"

JOHNNY CHRIST

"We're all really involved, but me and Matt have a strong vision for that stuff – artistically and visually. I think that's probably my biggest strong point," says Zacky Vengeance – a core part of Avenged's creative dynamic, who also leant his skills to the record's dark and electrifying album cover. "Everyone in the band shares the same vision, but it's been really cool on this album because it's really let me run wild. We're all on the same page and we're all trying to out-do ourselves, so ideas can come from any direction at any time."

"I think it's the biggest thing we've done," admits Johnny of the scale of the task his band took on. "[But] I'm super-excited because it's something completely different – it's a completely different vibe. But it's still going to be *us*, and we're still going to have fun with it."

"In the way that fucking fire, fire, fire, more fire and a crazy backdrop is what an Avenged Sevenfold show is – that may be no more," Synyster Gates admits, in news that will be music to the ears of fire brigades around the country. "We like to have a traditional foundation with being a band and our roots, but to go different places and explore is what inspires us to keep everything fresh."

M. points to one notable – if not surprising – influence on his band's thinking: Kanye West. After being struck with inspiration by the rapper (along with the likes of Beyoncé and Radiohead) when it came to The Stage's surprise release in October, the frontman was also impressed after seeing Kanye live on his Saint Pablo tour in the States. So much so, in fact, that he went to three of the dates. And though he attended as a fan, as a performer he took a *lot* from the mentality to translate into Avenged Sevenfold's own gigs.

"The best show I've been to in a long time was Kanye's new show," he gushes. "It was just completely innovative – he's on a platform above the crowd the whole time, there's no soundboard, the subs line up the basketball arena so the music is coming from everywhere. It's new and just super-inventive. It's a hip-hop show but there's a *pit*, because everyone is underneath him and he's above you. That, to me, was thinking outside of the box. He brought out something that everybody had never seen before. And so it's thinking on that level – not necessarily trying to go to our old tricks."

M. describes "a Star Wars ride at Disneyland" as the type of journey the crowds can expect from an Avenged Sevenfold gig in 2017, as he hopes to bring people into the world of space and artificial

SHADOWS' 2017 PREVIEW!

A SNEAK PEEK AT WHAT THE NEXT 12 MONTHS WILL HOLD FOR M.

THE ALBUM I MOST WANT TO HEAR IN 2017 IS...
"Hopefully Tool or System Of A Down – I kind of know a little bit about both those records, and I definitely can't say for sure if either will come out, but I really hope they do!"

MY PERSONAL GOALS FOR 2017 ARE...
"It would be to keep a good balance between touring and family, and make sure that I spend as much time as possible with my family – that's my only goal, because I know touring is going to be insane!"

THE BOOK I CAN'T WAIT TO READ IN 2017 IS...
"Every book I want to read right now is announced... But if Richard Dawkins [pictured] or Sam Harris releases something then I look forward to reading it."

THE VIDEO GAME I'M MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO IS...
"I'm excited for the next Call Of Duty, and, for my son's sake, the new Goat Simulator! He's four, and it's this hilarious game where you basically run around as a goat, and you can't die, and there's this goat theme song (*laughs*). You do everything – you can even head-butt a puking girl on a bed out of a window to get a new goat! It's just stupid stuff!"

IN THE WORLD OF SPORTS, I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE...
"I'm interested to see how the [NBA team] Golden State Warriors do with Kevin Durant in their team – although I'm a [LA] Lakers fan. And maybe Tiger Woods will return in golf, so we'll see how he does."

HOLIDAY-WISE, THIS YEAR I'M GOING TO...
"I always go fishing in Oregon, and I'm always at my place in the desert for golf purposes. And going snowboarding – I was just in Park City [Utah], and me and my wife were snowboarding and saw this school of three-year-olds on skis, and we didn't realise they started that early so we were like, 'We've *got* to bring the kids!'"

THE AVENGED SEVENFOLD SHOW I'M MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO IN 2017 IS...
"I can't talk about it right now, because I'm not at liberty to do that, and I'll get in big trouble!"

intelligence. And while it would make sense to use the virtual reality technology that the band have already dipped their toes into to accomplish these goals, practically speaking it just isn't feasible. For one, it would involve an arena of fans having to download an app before the gig, and be on their devices for the majority of the show. And though the effects would certainly look phenomenal on a screen, it's not something M. Shadows visualises in the immediate future – especially as it has the potential to take away from the actual gig itself, and the whole reason fans are there in the first place. "We have to ask ourselves the question of: do we really want 15,000 people sitting there with their phones out the whole time? That wouldn't be good," he admits.

However, one thing Avenged *are* using to their advantage is the company who brought their Capitol Records vision to life last year – the same production firm behind some of the world's most explosive performances, Cirque du Soleil. "The people saw the [Capitol Records] thing with all the planets coming in and all that stuff – that's the company that we're using on our tour," M. grins. "So when you're there you're just being encompassed by this wall of *stuff*, like images with planets crashing and lightning and the album cover moving and zooming into Earth. All that stuff is what we want to have happen at the show."

"YOU CAN EXPECT A STAR WARS RIDE AT DISNEYLAND!"

M. SHADOWS

"When it comes down to anything transcendent, as long as you have the imagination, the money, and the technology is up-to-date, I think you can kind of do anything," adds Syn. "There's a multitude of different things you can do that require a big budget and technology. We have a couple of those things going for ourselves at this point, very luckily. So we're going to do some cool stuff."

Yet, as Avenged themselves might be the first to admit in light of the well-publicised dip in sales that followed The Stage's surprise release, being the first through the wall often comes with bruising. Is it at all nerve-wracking, then, for the band to be stepping away from the norm of what a metal band should be doing? From the way The Stage was released, to the sound of the record, and now to the live show – are you apprehensive about people's reactions to your latest move?

"It doesn't worry me, because I just don't really care what anyone thinks about it," M. chuckles. His focus, he says, is purely on making art that's true to Avenged, regardless of outside opinions. "I know that when we put out a record like The Stage, there are people that just aren't going to get it. And the same is going to happen with the production. Some people like to wear their shirt with a skull on it and they like to wear their metal jacket and they want to see some flames, and that's fine. But this isn't going to be the band for them. We're going to be trying to do a lot of different things, and that's not going to end with the show."

"I live for it," agrees Zacky, who, along with the rest of his bandmates, is completely reinvigorated by this new wave of artistic freedom. "I'm 100 per cent fearless. And, as I've gotten older, I've been through so much, and I know that no matter what you do, you can always pick yourself back up. And I also know that no matter what we do, it's always going to be divided; you can't make everyone happy,

M. spots his mum in the crowd at Download 2014

THE SHOWS THAT SAVED MY LIFE

M. SHADOWS TAKES US INTO THE PIT AT THE GIGS THAT SHAPED HIMSELF AND AVENGED SEVENFOLD

THE FIRST SHOW I EVER WENT TO AS A FAN...

"The first 'big' band I ever saw was Reel Big Fish. Me and The Rev went when we were kids – Jimmy's dad took us, and he'd bring a book and sit in the corner. And we would mosh while everyone else was skanking, because we thought that was what you were supposed to do (*laughs*)! We went to a ton of punk-rock shows growing up – it *totally* influenced us. We were little metalheads already playing music at that point, and if you listen to our music there's so much stuff that we throw in there – it's obviously because we grew up in Southern California, where the ska scene was very close to the punk scene, which was very close to the metal scene... All that stuff was welcomed under the same umbrella."

THE FIRST SHOW THAT WE EVER PLAYED TOGETHER AS AVENGED SEVENFOLD...

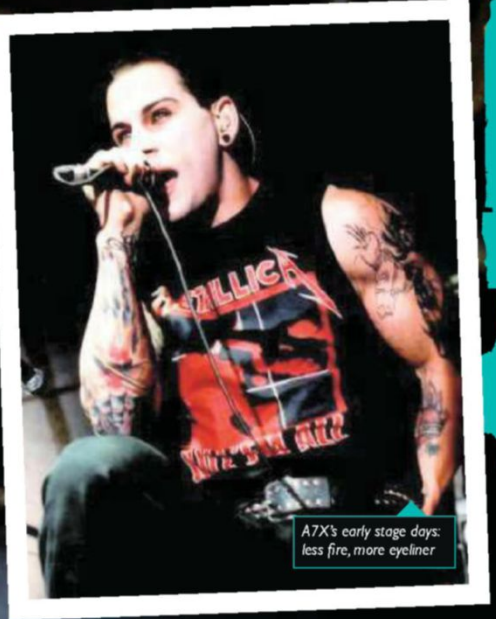
"There was, like, 10 friends there and they watched us and then left, and then some other band played afterwards and 10 of their friends watched them. The second or third show we ever played was at Chain Reaction, and we were playing to a hardcore scene and none of the kids would walk to the front of the stage – they'd watch you from the back with their arms crossed (*laughs*). Our first *big* shows were with bands like Twelve Tribes, Eighteen Visions, Poison The Well and Shai Hulud... It would be just a bunch of hardcore bands but it felt big for us – it was awesome. We had a three-song demo out at the time!"

THE FIRST TIME AVENGED SEVENFOLD EVER HEADLINED DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL...

"We had a week off before the show [in 2014], so we had a whole week to think about all the press building it up as, 'Oh, if these guys fail then all the young bands have no chance!' I remember giving myself enough time to be nervous, but as soon as we walked onstage it was all gone – I'm glad it went off without a hitch. It was the same feeling when we played Rock In Rio [in 2013] to 250,000 people, after Slayer but before Iron Maiden – that was nerve-wracking. I remember it happening real quick. Sometimes you just need to take your time up there and just let it come to you, and it's a better result!"

THE GIG WHEN I FIRST FELT LIKE AVENGED WERE ONTO SOMETHING SPECIAL...

"We were playing the Showcase Theater [in Corona, California, in December 2001], and it was sold out. At the time, if you had asked me how many people were there at that show, I probably would have said 900 – but it only holds, like, 300 people! But it just felt so *huge*; that's where I grew up going to shows. When we were able to play there a few years later it was like, 'This is going to be fucking awesome!' But we didn't even get paid – we sold the place out and the guy gave us pizza as payment (*laughs*)! But we were just like, 'Cool, we've got pizza and beer – we're going to be huge, man!'"



A7X's early stage days: less fire, more eyeliner

THE WORST SHOW AVENGED SEVENFOLD EVER PLAYED...

"We were in San Antonio, playing for a radio station. I remember we had a breakdown! We had sold a lot of records with City Of Evil at that point, and there was all these bands that we should have been playing after and we were already bitter about it – we were being total pricks. People were setting up our stage backwards and we had feedback the whole time, and I could see the crowd plugging their ears after, like, 30 seconds. So I just flipped out and threw my microphone down, Jimmy kicked over his drums and the guys threw their guitars and we got in the van and left. For, like, six years afterwards, that radio station would play 30 seconds of our songs and then turn it off (*laughs*). It's on YouTube, so you can check it out!"

so the best thing you can do is try your very best to always keep people on their toes and be ahead of the crowd."

While The Stage's lyrical content is the real driving force behind Avenged's meticulously thought-out production, the music on the record easily lends itself to this kind of out-of-this-world stage-show – from Sunny Disposition's elaborate horns, the organs opening the title-track and Creating God's huge Faith No More-style chorus. But what about those early fan-favourites that have been so huge for A7X's career, but don't necessarily have this level of majesty? Does an Unholy Confessions or a Second Heartbeat-type song fit anywhere in all of this?

"We're building a set list around things that we can morph into this world," M. Shadows reassures us. "So people might be seeing a different interpretation of older songs – things they might have thought, 'Oh, well, when they played Nightmare on the Nightmare tour, a guy was jumping off and hanging himself.' But now you're being taken somewhere else. It's a new look on old songs to make sure it all fits in with the vibe; we didn't want it to be back-and-forth. But, at the same time, we didn't want to play only The Stage songs – not yet. We're going to make it work… we're trying to make it cohesive."

"THERE'S NO REASON FOR US NOT TO FEEL COMFORTABLE SHARING A STAGE WITH AN ARCTIC MONKEYS, OR WHOEVER"
M. SHADOWS

And for new drummer Brooks Wackerman – who will be making his first-ever appearance on our shores as A7X's drummer in Dublin on January 7 – the band's set list is something he's especially keen to nail. "It's important for me to study Jimmy [The Rev]'s parts in detail – the parts that he wrote. I definitely feel a responsibility to deliver accordingly," he admits. "It took a week or so for me to feel comfortable playing a full set for the first time. But now it just feels great. We're all very excited to see what songs are going to be on the set list, which we're all thinking about. It should be a good amalgamation of the catalogue, with four or five new songs."

You've got six other Avenged Sevenfold albums to learn, and a lot of ground to cover. Has that been tough?

"There's been a lot of solo practising on my part," Brooks says. "Even on tour the band will throw out, 'Hey, can you learn this song? Can you learn that song?' And I'm like, 'Oh, that *nine*-minute song you want me to learn? Yeah, I'll go learn that one right now!' (*Laughs*) But it's been a good ride!"

Even better than Brooks' commitment to the band is the fact that he's already feeling like a part of the family thanks to Avenged's welcoming fanbase.

"I could not ask for a better reception with all the fans," he smiles. "Going into a new band – which I've done a couple of times in the past – you just never know how people are going to react. And especially with the legacy of drumming. It's amazing just how loyal of a fanbase Avenged have, and they've been nothing short of supportive with my voice in this band. It's truly amazing."

With the immense levels of effort each member of the band is going into, there's little doubt that Avenged Sevenfold are about to pull off something very special. And the good news for fans is that the UK tour is just the beginning. Planning and overseeing might be taking up a good chunk of their time right now (the band have travelled to Ireland more than a week early to sort logistics in advance), but it isn't stopping M. Shadows from dreaming of the future, and plotting just how far he can take his band's already-impressive vision. Take the fact that famous American scientist Neil deGrasse Tyson made a cameo on The Stage's epic 15-minute closer, Exist, for example. Is translating such an extraordinary moment on the album into a live setting something that can be accomplished?

"I want to do a show at the Hollywood Bowl where we record the whole show with an orchestra and horns, and then I would want to get Neil there to do his thing," M. enthuses. "Obviously Neil's not going to come on tour with us, but if we do this song, maybe we'd get him speaking and having that stuff happening. I'm even thinking about doing videos with Neil or doing a video with Sam Harris or someone in that field. As of now there's so much on our plates… when you're trying to redo every aspect, it becomes kind of daunting. And right now I don't think we're going to bust that song out so early [in the tour cycle]. But, yeah, *everything* is on the table."

Beyond Avenged's tour preparation and current whirlwind, M. Shadows has his eyes set firmly on another festival-topping spot. "We would look at doing another Download, but we'd also look at Reading & Leeds. We'd look at doing more mainstream festivals. I don't think there's any reason for us not to feel comfortable walking on a stage and playing alongside an Arctic Monkeys or whoever. We're not elitist in that way; we want to play for everybody. And we think that the more bands that can do that, the better for our genre, and the better for heavy metal and rock music in general. We're open to anything at this point, as long as we can be *us*. This whole cycle is focused on just doing what we want to do. So it's going to be interesting – we'll see what happens (*laughs*)."

"To be completely honest, it's one of the most exciting, as well as nerve-wracking, things that we've done in a long time," Zacky concludes. "Any time you're the first try something different, you're walking into uncharted territories, and it's very exhilarating and invigorating, but it's also comes with a lot of unknowns. But as far as excitement, yes, it's been extremely exciting."

Next week, A7X aren't going to be the only ones feeling this excitement. And as thousands of fans make their way to venues across the nation for the first enormous tour of the year – and, possibly the *biggest* tour of 2017, full stop – excitement levels will be reaching fever pitch. Whether they can build on the success of The Stage and turn their ideas into a reality remains to be seen, but you can't help but admire their ambition. And, at their rate, you wouldn't dream of betting against Avenged Sevenfold putting on the most impressive shows of their career.

The only question is: can you keep up with them?

THE STAGE IS OUT NOW VIA CAPITOL. AVENGED SEVENFOLD TOUR THE UK THIS WEEK – SEE THE GIG GUIDE FOR INFORMATION

Even the world's biggest rockstars can get locked out of their own gigs when they've forgotten their passes

MOJO BLACK SABBATH - ON SALE NOW

As their last ever shows loom, the legendary Black Sabbath convene to offer their final testament. We interview the three remaining original members – Ozzy Osbourne, Tony Iommi and Geezer Butler – and assess their impact on punk, metal, grunge and more with the help of Dave Grohl and others. MOJO's FREE CD also gets heavy, as Volume 4 from our popular Heavy Nuggets stable delivers mindblowing tracks from Wolf People, Boris, Sleep and more, plus Charles Bradley's immense cover of Black Sabbath's Changes.

Also in the new issue: Sylvie Simmons (and Bono) hymn the greatness of Leonard Cohen; the sociopathic soundquake that was New York's No Wave; Traffic; John Cale rebooting The Velvet Underground, Buzzcocks, The XX, Temple Of The Dog. And MOJO's essential music tips for 2017!

FRESH BLOOD 2017

WHAT BETTER TIME THAN THE NEW YEAR TO GIVE YOUR MUSIC TASTE A TRANSFUSION? **ROCK**, **METAL**, **NOISE**, **POP-PUNK**, **INDIE** – WHAT FOLLOWS ARE THE 60 BEST ROCK BANDS FROM EVERY CORNER OF OUR SCENE. READ ON. IT'S UNLIKELY YOU'LL COME AWAY WITHOUT AT LEAST ONE NEW FAVOURITE BAND...

WORDS: RYAN DE FREITAS, JAMES HICKIE, JAMES HINGLE, NICK RUSKELL, JENNYFER J. WALKER, IAN WINWOOD
PHOTOS: ANDY FORD, ANDREW LIPOVSKY, MATTHIAS WILLI, THOMAS ELLIOTT,

ZEAL & ARDOR

THE BLACK METAL PIONEER

FOR FANS OF: MYRKUR, DEAFHEAVEN, VODUN

BLACK METAL, IS IT? DOES THAT MEAN THEY FORMED UNDER A FUNERAL MOON WHILE KISSING GOATS?

Yeah. More specifically, it's 'American slave and black metal'. Played by a man originally from Switzerland. A bizarre mix? Absolutely, but that's half the point. "There was this game I played: go on 4chan's music board and ask users to name a genre each. I'd take two of these genres and try to make a song of them in 30 minutes," explains mainman Manuel Gagneux, before revealing how a meeting of a racist suggestion and metal's most extreme subgenre stuck with him. "One day they suggested 'n****r music' and 'black metal'. I didn't make it then, but the idea stuck with me."

THAT'S A PRETTY DISGUSTING THING TO READ – EVEN FOR THE INTERNET...

You're telling us. Nonetheless, that 'idea' stuck with Manuel and led him to imagine gospel vocals with blastbeats behind them – the basic gist of their Devil Is Fine record. And, thematically, there's plenty of common ground between the two. "I thought about how Christianity was imposed upon both American slaves and the Norwegians and how they rebelled in interesting ways. Thematically there was an odd connotation," muses Manuel, before adding, "I also find it funny to sing satanic stuff in a gospel kind of voice."

SO IS THIS AN IDEA THAT GOT OUT OF CONTROL?

Kind of. But it's a very good one. "I don't know, man. We've been a band for like two months. I guess we're lucky to be together in this. All of the people in the band are crazy nice," says Manuel. "The situation I am in right now comes to mind. I'm on lists I think I have no business being on. I'm very happy about it, but certainly confused."

HANG ON... MANUEL DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A PO-FACED BLACK METAL HARDASS. HE SOUNDS QUITE NICE, EVEN.

He is. "Making music makes me happy," he says, without any kind of pretension. "It's as simple as that. I get giddy and excited when something interesting or stirring happens in music. It's basically magic; you make the air vibrate and potentially somewhere on the other side of the friggin' globe, someone feels an emotion to that. It's so silly and so wonderful. How could I not be completely taken by that?" Black metal's soul just got a total makeover.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: Black metal with slave-song overtones.
HEAR: The dark, bizarre blast of single Children's Summon.
CHECK OUT: The band play Camden Underworld on April 20, after the release of their debut full-length, Devil Is Fine, on February 3.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/zealandardor

BAD COP/BAD COP

THE MOST BADASS GRRRL GANG ON THE PLANET

WHERE: The sunny south of the Golden State, California.
WHY: That excellent name aside? Try attitude, choruses and punk rock bangers on for size.
LISTEN TO: Their debut record Not Sorry, released on Fat Wreck Chords.
FOR FANS OF: The Donnas, NOFX, Green Day.
Badcopbadcopband.com

PINEGROVE

COUNTRY-TINGED EMO. BETTER THAN IT SOUNDS

WHERE: Montclair, New Jersey, USA.
WHY: No-one sounds quite like this, and singer Evan Hall's voice is incredible.
LISTEN TO: Debut record Cardinal, out now on Run For Cover Records.
FOR FANS OF: Modern Baseball, Sun Kil Moon, Counting Crows.
Pinegroveband.com

ALLISON CRUTCHFIELD

INDIE-ROCK WITH HOOKS UPON HOOKS

WHERE: Philadelphia.
WHY: Allison's ear for melody is second to none. You'll be humming along from the first listen.
LISTEN TO: Dean's Room, the first single from new record Tourist In This Town.
FOR FANS OF: The Muffs, Juliana Hatfield, Brody Dalle.
Allisoncrutchfield.bandcamp.com

PALE ANGELS

THE SCUZZIEST, FUZZIEST PUNK ROCK

WHERE: Split between the U.S. and, er, Swansea.
WHY: They recorded their second album in two days, and released it on the ever awesome Specialist Subject. The underground lives.
LISTEN TO: 2015's Imaginary People.
FOR FANS OF: Mudhoney, Dinosaur Jr., Sebadoh.
Facebook.com/paleangels

BRUTUS

ATMOSPHERIC PUNK FUCKING ROCK, WITH A TWIST OF MOGWAI

WHERE: Leuven, Belgium.
WHY: They started out as a Refused tribute act. Then they wrote their own songs. Kept the velocity.
LISTEN TO: Single All Along. Debut album Burst is out in February.
FOR FANS OF: Slotface, Sonic Youth, Mogwai.
Wearebrutus.com

THE EMO DREAMERS

THE HOTELIER

FOR FANS OF: BRAND NEW, DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE, MANCHESTER ORCHESTRA

POT PLANTS THAT MAKE MUSIC?

No, stupid – this is The Hotelier: a band who've quietly been going about the business of being brilliant. They put out their third record, Goodness, last year as they transitioned from being one of the best emo acts into a phenomenal band, regardless of genre.

OH, INTERESTING. DO THEY STILL HAVE THAT EMO SIDE TO THEM?

To some extent, yeah. Their latest music is still packed with emotion and bits that'd sound great if you listen to it staring out of your window on a rainy day. You know what – we'll let vocalist/bassist, Christian Holden explain it for you: "We make music to tickle a soft spot in our listeners' bodies that grounds them to a place of clarity. Musically it comes from a lineage of pop-rock and, spiritually, from an anarchic youth awareness focusing on growth and reclamation in our lives." Doesn't that sound nice?

INDEED. WHAT ELSE HAS HE GOT TO SAY FOR HIMSELF?

Loads, actually. If you ask him about his goals for 2017 – spoiler: we did – his ambitions are as bold as they are noble. "I want to perform for people," Christian starts. "I want to work to solidify our place in this world of people making things. I want to befriend more people who don't make things. I want to appreciate people who facilitate making things. I want to work to materially support those I care about who have violence enacted upon them. I want to work to resist and subvert state and capital. And I'd like to write another record."

MORE THAN JUST A BAND, HUH?

Exactly – as all great bands are. But Christian's grand plan is, ultimately, a musical one. "I'd like us to create a catalogue of records that lasts on and inspires other musicians to approach music writing differently, more intentionally," he says. "I'd like us to influence people who will make work that moves and challenges me." And you wouldn't bet against it.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: Emo that's wiped away its tears and is ready to take on the world again.
HEAR: Goodness stand-out Two Deliverances.
CHECK OUT: The band on tour in January.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/thehotelier

CHAPEL

POP-ROCK DUO MANAGED BY ISSUES' TYLER CARTER

WHERE: Athens, Georgia.
WHY: Carter Hardin and Kortney Grinwis make irresistible tunes, much like Waterparks and fellow 2017 hopefuls Too Close To Touch.
LISTEN TO: Debut single Caught Up.
FOR FANS OF: Against The Current, Fun., Issues.
Facebook.com/ChapelUSA

TALL SHIPS

A PERFECT SOUNDTRACK TO CALM SEAS AND STORMY SWELLS

WHERE: Falmouth, but they now reside in Brighton.
WHY: They prove that rock doesn't have to be dumb to sound massive.
LISTEN TO: Second album Impressions, which is released on February 10.
FOR FANS OF: No Devotion, Lift To Experience, The Xcerts.
Wearetallships.co.uk

MILESTONES

SOARING CHORUSES AND HUGE GUITARS

WHERE: The rainy streets of North West England.
WHY: Because this lot sound as if they might be huge, and you'll want to say that you liked them before any of your friends.
LISTEN TO: The group's debut EP, Equal Measures.
FOR FANS OF: Jimmy Eat World, Linkin Park, Weezer.
Milestonesband.co.uk

PRIESTS

TWISTED, SURF-TINGED PUNK ROCK

WHERE: Capital music for a capital city, this lot are from Washington DC.
WHY: The song Pink White House is bound to piss off America's new president.
LISTEN TO: Debut LP, Nothing Feels Natural.
FOR FANS OF: Siouxsie And The Banshees, Bikini Kill, New York Dolls.
Priests.bandcamp.com

OCEAN GROVE

LIKE HELLIONS? GET READY TO MEET THEIR MUSICAL BRETHREN

WHERE: Melbourne, Australia.
WHY: They've got their own creed, The Rhapsody Manifesto, in which they state they would "rather fade into obscurity and die out than live prosperously in a pigeonhole of mediocrity".
LISTEN TO: Recently-released single These Boys Light Fires.
FOR FANS OF: Hellions, Northlane, System Of A Down.
Facebook.com/oceangrovemelbourne

THE NEW MASTERS OF EUPHORIC METALCORE!

AREA 11

FOR FANS OF: BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE, ENTER SHIKARI, BLACK VEIL BRIDES

THE SINGER OF THIS BAND IS CALLED SPARKLES*? ERM, YOU SURE?

Yeah, it's an anime thing, don't ask. While he might have the name of a My Little Pony, sometime YouTuber Sparkles* is actually totes intellectual, and before forming Area 11 (name taken from anime series Code Geass) he completed a master's degree in Biological Photography. "I returned to Nottingham after cliché-ing my way across China in a desperate attempt to 'figure myself out'," says the frontman. "What I figured out was that I was willing to do just about anything to avoid getting a real job." With his previous band having dissipated, he set about creating this new group that would go on to play electronic-infused rock. "We take a lot of different genres, get them drunk, put them all in a bed and hope they produce strong, beautiful children."

SO HOW DID THIS GROUP FORM, EXACTLY? AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Well, he ended up living with guitarist Alex Parvis, who asked Sparkles* to record a jam session he was having with a mate. "A few drinks later and we had created what can only be described as 'the shittest piece of music ever committed to record'," he explains. "I kicked them out [of my room], wedged the door, and wondered what the fuck I was doing. And for some reason, a week later we decided to try again. Somehow, this time we recorded a song [Euphemia] which now at least 833,000 people have listened to. Which is a bit strange." Although it's not really, since Area 11 are the sort of genre-blending metal-electro-punk champs who make perfect sense in 2017.

IMPRESSIVE STATS. SO WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO DO WITH THIS PROJECT?

"I think what we really want is to try to create music which makes people consider the very nature of the reality we share, and to achieve a Lennon-McCartney level of songwriting success," says the ambitious frontman, whose career highlight to date is Lady Gaga telling him he was "super talented" on Twitter. "That was a surreal moment," he says. "This is my job now, which is crazy. It's everything to me, it satisfies me artistically, and keeps me in Happy Meals." And there's the dream, kids, right there.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: Anime-inspired electro-rock from Bristol.
HEAR: The four-piece's second album Modern Synthesis, out now.
CHECK OUT: The video for Euphemia, which is quite the YouTube hit.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/area11band

KNOCKED LOOSE

INTENSE SCREAMO-METAL THAT SOUNDS LIKE IT WANTS A FIGHT

WHERE: Oldham County, Kentucky.
WHY: If you like your metal with a sandpaper finish, Knocked Loose are the band for you.
LISTEN TO: The fittingly-titled Damaged Goods EP.
FOR FANS OF: Pantera, Superjoint Ritual, Monster Magnet.
Knockedloose.bandcamp.com

PRIMETIME

LO-FI ANTIDOTE TO CRAP MACHISMO ROCK THE WORLD OVER

WHERE: London, and thus fittingly fearless and lairy.
WHY: Because in songs like Pervert, Primetime aren't gonna take any shit.
LISTEN TO: The quartet's jagged Going Places EP.
FOR FANS OF: The Slits, Bikini Kill, Huggy Bear.
Soundcloud.com/thisisprimetime

IRK

'NOISE ROCK' SAY THEY. 'SOUNDS LIKE ANIMALS DYING' SAY WE

WHERE: Leeds – the go-to city for catchy cacophonies.
WHY: The off-kilter bass suggests they dig Primus – everything else suggests they dig being indefinable.
LISTEN TO: 2015 split EP with Londoners Wren.
FOR FANS OF: Hawk Eyes, Pulled Apart By Horses, HECK.
Irkband.bandcamp.com

TANCRED

THE CATCHIEST POWER-POP WE'VE HEARD IN YEARS

WHERE: Maine, New England, US of A.
WHY: We dare you to listen to Bed Case and not fall instantly in love.
LISTEN TO: Their brilliant album, Out Of The Garden, out now.
FOR FANS OF: The Posies, The Lemonheads, Weezer.
Tancredmusic.com

SHEER MAG

INDIE-ROCK WITH '70S GUITAR LICKS ALL OVER IT

WHERE: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
WHY: Vocalist Tina Halladay is a bona fide star, and leads her band with nostalgic pomp.
LISTEN TO: The trio of ace EPs on their Bandcamp.
FOR FANS OF: Pat Benatar, Go-Gos, The Runaways.
Sheermag.bandcamp.com

FRESH BLOOD 2017

AMAZONS

THE NEXT BIG RADIO ROCK BAND!

FOR FANS OF: FOO FIGHTERS, YOU ME AT SIX, NIRVANA

CAN WE BUY STUFF FROM THEM, AND WILL THE POSTAGE BE FREE?

Well, no, but The Amazons *can* sell you some emotionally-urgent rock'n'roll tunes. Frontman Matt Thomson says the quartet formed out of a hunger "to discover the world that lay behind the CDs or cassette tapes that we were playing to death". That was back in 2014, and it's been a wild ride ever since. Stardom is starting to beckon, with the band getting flashed in a Co-op after the Isle Of Wight Festival (as you do), and bassist Elliot Briggs being recognised in the middle of a mosh-pit during twenty one pilots at Reading Festival.

WE WERE THERE. DIDN'T SEE HIM, MIND. SO WHAT SETS 'EM APART?

"I think people are getting sick and tired of this trend of making music on laptops now," offers Matt on why you should bother Googling the Reading rockers. "Now anyone can buy the latest plug-ins and software and make something decent in their bedrooms, it's not as special. I think the chemistry in bands who have played, slept, and eaten out of each others' pockets for years is a lot more interesting and that's exactly what we've been doing in The Amazons. We're not polished, we're not perfect, but we've given a lot of blood and sweat for this."

EW, DON'T TOUCH US. SO, WHAT'S NEXT FOR THEM, THEN?

They spent the summer of 2016 recording an album with GRAMMY-nominated producer Catherine Marks, and the plan is to "get that heard by as many people as possible". They're also pretty into packing themselves into a van and driving up and down the country, so expect plenty of shows. "The buzz you get playing in front of live audiences…" starts the frontman, "It's like a drug – you keep on coming back for more. [We want to] reach and connect with as many people as possible and inspire young people to bin off the turntables or laptops and pick up an instrument."

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: Reading rock'n'rollers who are gonna sound huge on the radio.
HEAR: The quartet's most recent single, In My Mind, on iTunes.
CHECK OUT: 2015's Don't You Wanna EP.
MORE INFO: Theamazons.co.uk

BLACK HONEY

SUN-SOAKED INDIE-ROCK, LIKE DRINKING TOO MUCH FANTA

WHERE: Somehow not California – Brighton.
WHY: It's January; their songs sound like summer.
LISTEN TO: Recent single Hello Today.
FOR FANS OF: Velocity Girl, Lush, Lana Del Ray (if she was in a rock band).
Blackhoneyuk.bandcamp.com

DREAM WIFE

KNOTTY AND INDEPENDENT ALTERNATIVE ROCK

WHERE: London, and they don't sound happy about it.
WHY: Any group that has lyrics like *'I'm gonna cut you up / I'm gonna fuck you up'* deserve a listen.
LISTEN TO: FUU ('Fuck U Up', we suspect).
FOR FANS OF: Hole, Pussy Riot, The Distillers.
Dreamwife.bandcamp.com

AWOOGA

COSMIC TRIO BEAMED DOWN TO STEEL CITY

WHERE: Why, Sheffield, of course.
WHY: Their space-rock caught the attention of, Amplifier's Sel Balamir, who signed them to his Rockosmos label. How apt.
LISTEN TO: Thief, from last year's Alpha EP.
FOR FANS OF: Pelican, Cult Of Luna, Led Zeppelin.
Awoogaband.com

EMPLOYED TO SERVE

HARDCORE WITH A NASTY RIGHT HOOK

WHERE: The quiet little southern town of Woking.
WHY: Who doesn't love music that boggles your brain and makes you unleash your inner mosh?
LISTEN TO: Their 2015 album, Greyer Than You Remember, on Holy Roar.
FOR FANS OF: Rolo Tomassi, HECK, Palm Reader.
Employedtoserve.com

PRESS TO MECO

INFECTIOUS ALT.ROCK WITH REAL TECHNICAL CHARM

WHERE: Should be from Metropolis in 2089, but reside in South East England.
WHY: It's intelligent, catchy and boasting harmonies greater than Songs Of Praise.
LISTEN TO: The band's debut album, Good Intent, out now.
FOR FANS OF: Enter Shikari, Mallory Knox, Motion City Soundtrack.
Pressto meco.com

Fresh Blood 2017 continues on page 38!

KERRANG!

AGAINST THE CURRENT

CHRISSY COSTANZA

PHOTO: PAUL HARRIES

KERRANG!

ANDY BLACK

PHOTO: PAUL HARRIES

KERRANG!

TWENTY ØNE PILØTS

JOSH DUN

PHOTO: DOUGLAS SONDERS

KERRANG!

TWENTY ØNE PILØTS

TYLER JOSEPH

PHOTO: GEORGE FAIRBAIRN

KERRANG!
PIERCE THE VEIL
VIC FUENTES

PHOTO: TOM BARNES

KERRANG!

Gerard Way

PHOTO: MAX FAIRCLOUGH

KERRANG!

HIGHLY SUSPECT

JOHNNY STEVENS

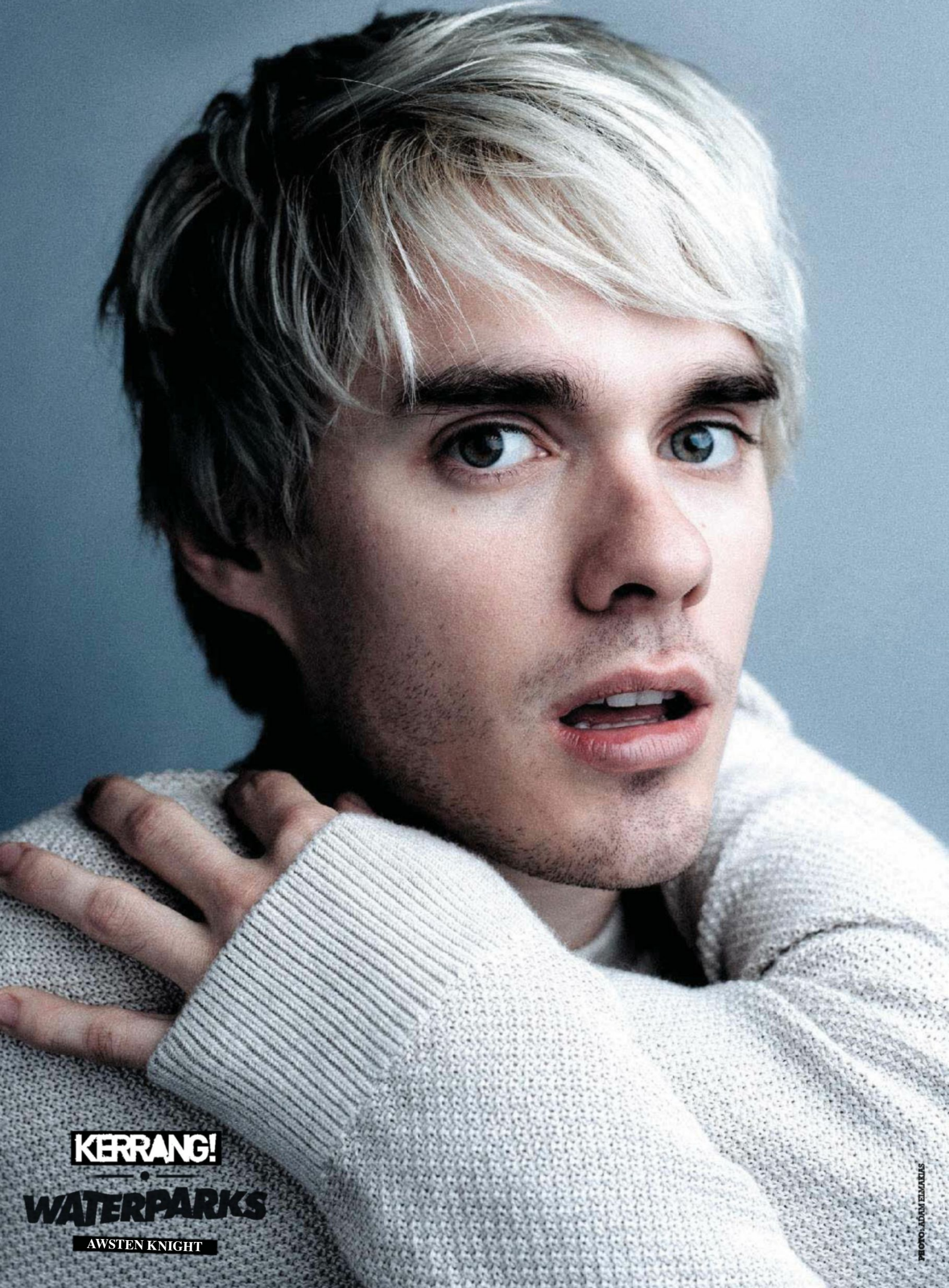
PHOTO: JENN FIVE

KERRANG!

PVRIS

LYNN GUNN

PHOTO: ANDREW LIPOVSKY


KERRANG!
WATERPARKS
AWSTEN KNIGHT
PHOTO: ADAM ELMAKIAS

KERRANG!

SWMRS

COLE BECKER

PHOTO: LAUREN KAYE WAGNER

Welcome back to Fresh Blood 2017!

THE NEW STARS OF GARAGE ROCK!

SP

THE NEXT BREAKOUT EMO KINGS!

CAN'T SWIM

FOR FANS OF: BRAND NEW, THE WONDER YEARS, KNUCKLE PUCK

WHO ARE THEY AND WHAT ARE THEIR PLANS FOR 2017?

This is New Jersey quartet Can't Swim, and they've got some big plans for this year. 1) Put out their debut album, 2) Tour places they've never been before, and 3) Take a Zumba class. Though we're not sure how serious that last goal is, as – despite making super-emotional rock – this band don't take themselves too seriously at all, summing up their sound using one scathing review of their Death Deserves A Name EP which read: 'Look at these skinny jean-wearing gothic losers mistaking punk for metal.' "I thought that summed it up pretty well," says vocalist/guitarist Chris LoPorto.

BUT YOU'RE SAYING THEY TAKE THE MUSIC SERIOUSLY, THOUGH, RIGHT?

Oh yes. Since forming in the spring of 2015, after guitarist Mike Sanchez left his Ibanez at Chris' house, they've been taking the music very seriously indeed. "I'd recently bought a new laptop with recording software on it. Plugged the guitar in and started writing songs. Sent said songs to the guys in the 'band'. Pure Noise heard it. Signed our 'band' and put out the EP. And here we are," explains the frontman. "Seeing kids connect to our music or our lyrics really makes me feel this is what I should be spending my time doing."

SO HOW ARE THEY FINDING BAND LIFE?

Up and down. With only one EP to their name, the dollars aren't exactly rolling in, and they find themselves living on the poverty line daily. "If the venue doesn't have catering, you can catch us sharing a bag of pretzels and drinking water from the sink," says Chris. But they are enjoying some recognition in their hometown. "Someone recognised my mother at [U.S. supermarket] Target. She said 'Can't what?' and told the kid to kick rocks. Plus, the most popular kid in my high school wrote a Facebook status about how much we sucked – that was a pretty nice moment for me." Very nice indeed. That dork from high school is going to feel worse and worse as 2017 progresses.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: New Jersey-bred rock that's passionate as you like.

HEAR: The quartet's latest single Stranger, which came out last November.

CHECK OUT: Their excellent five-track Death Deserves A Name EP.

MORE INFO: Facebook.com/cantswim

STARCRAWLER

HIGH-ENERGY AMERICAN ALT.ROCK WITH A SERIOUS GROOVE

WHERE: Southern California, but don't expect a pop-punk group. **WHY:** They sound amazing. They look phenomenal. Maximum raunch. Hop aboard! **LISTEN TO:** The Ants single, released last year. **FOR FANS OF:** New York Dolls, The Struts, Queen.

Facebook.com/starcrawlertheband

ACRES

WONDERFUL POST-HARDCORE WITH A FUZZY TWIST OF PUNK

WHERE: England's glorious, sun-soaked, fun-times south coast. **WHY:** Because Big Ideas + a Big Sound = a Big Future. **LISTEN TO:** Their brand-new single, In Sickness & Health. Like, now, yeah? **FOR FANS OF:** Northlane, In Hearts Wake, Thrice.

Facebook.com/acresband

AUTUMN RUIN

MELODIC MASH-UP OF INDIE RHYTHMS AND EMO-ROCK CHORUSES

WHERE: Like so many fine bands, the 'Ruin are from The North – Manchester. **WHY:** Because with the new year blues kicking in, they'll liven up a dreary January. **LISTEN TO:** We Make Our Own Damn Luck EP. **FOR FANS OF:** Don Broco, Mallory Knox, You Me At Six.

Autumnruin.bandcamp.com

LIKE PACIFIC

ANTHEMIC, ENERGETIC WOULD-BE ARENA ROCK

WHERE: Maple Leaf country – Toronto, Canada. **WHY:** Because this is a group that are unashamed to think big. Theirs is music with ambition to burn. **LISTEN TO:** The Distant Like You Asked album, released last year. **FOR FANS OF:** You Me At Six, Biffy Clyro, Young Guns.

Facebook.com/likepacific

MEAT WAVE

ROCK TO PROVE THAT WEIRD IS WONDERFUL

WHERE: Chicago – a rock city with a great pedigree. **WHY:** When they take flight, the results are fantastic. **LISTEN TO:** The band's clatteringly brilliant Delusion Moon album. **FOR FANS OF:** Frank Carter & The Rattlesnakes, The Buzzcocks, The Clash.

Meatwavechicago.bandcamp.com

RING KING

FOR FANS OF: THE WHITE STRIPES, THE VACCINES, THE STROKES

WE'D LIKE A FUN FACT ABOUT THIS LOT, PLEASE. GO!

How about the fact they formed after frontman (and drummer) Tarek Musa got a *really* bad hangover? After drunkenly chatting about the music he wanted to make the night before, he downed a Berocca and simply got on with it. "One of my ambitions was to finally realise my need to make garage music, but I wanted to do it with a bit of pop thrown in," he says. "The first song I ever wrote for Spring King was Let's Ride – my friends loved it, and people's reactions inspired me to keep writing. If a song wasn't finished within that day it was deleted. This taught me to write real fast."

SO HE CAN WRITE, SURE, BUT WHAT INSPIRED HIM IN THE FIRST PLACE?

It was an obsession with The Who that made him pick up drum sticks, aged 12. But really, he owes his musical career to a mid-'90s Tom Hanks movie. "That Thing You Do! was about a touring band and their manager in the '60s… as a kid I watched it a lot and dreamt of touring like that," says Tarek. The film led him to lunchtime classroom sessions with guitarist Pete Darlington, where they'd "lock all the doors to the music room, open all the windows and play Jimi Hendrix songs, badly, to kids at lunch time, whilst the teachers would bang away on the doors trying to get in!"

WE LOVE THAT FILM. THEY SEEM LEGIT. WE'RE SOLD.

Wait a second – they don't *actually* want you to check them out. "In many ways you probably shouldn't," offers the frontman, in a way entirely in fitting with his band's dreamy slacker aesthetic. "You might be really pissed off that you've wasted your time. Alternatively, you might stumble across some decent tunes." But if you decide to go against their wishes, they'll be releasing more music this year, as well as touring. And if you go to a show, you might see their biggest fan, Elton John, there. "We met him when we performed on Later… With Jools Holland, and he loved it," grins Tarek. Alright, show-off…

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: Mancunian four-piece playing hearty-eyed fuzzy art-pop-punk.
HEAR: Who Are You?, their most-streamed song on Spotify.
CHECK OUT: The quartet's debut, Tell Me If You Like To.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/springkingmusic

THE LEMON TWIGS

SOMETIMES DREAMY, OCCASIONALLY JAGGED ALTERNATIVE ROCK

WHERE: Long Island, New York City.
WHY: Because they 'do' grown-up emotions and sophisticated arrangements.
LISTEN TO: Last year's Do Hollywood album.
FOR FANS OF: Pixies, the Ramones, David Bowie.
Thelemontwigs.com

SHAME

ATMOSPHERIC ROCK THAT SOUNDS LIKE FEW BANDS EVER

WHERE: South London, although they could be Mark E. Smith's Mancunian sons.
WHY: Their hypnotic music sticks in your brain long after the songs have left the room.
LISTEN TO: The artful and argumentative The Lick.
FOR FANS OF: Pussy Galore, Throbbing Gristle, the Fall.
Facebook.com/shamebanduk

FANGCLUB

THREE-PIECE GARAGE ROCK WITH SONGS THAT SURF RAINBOWS

WHERE: Dublin, Ireland.
WHY: If chunky guitars and hummable melodies are your thing, you won't struggle to fall in love with this at first listen.
LISTEN TO: Recent EP Coma Happy.
FOR FANS OF: Pavement, Weezer, Pixies.
Fangclubofficial.com

THE KUT

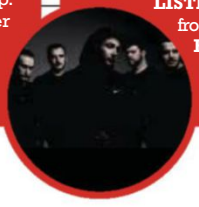
ALL-GIRL TRIO RELEASE THEIR INNER COURTNEY LOVE

WHERE: London – the only place they deemed could hold their big sound.
WHY: Led by Princess Maha, this is a neat twist on grunge-pop.
LISTEN TO: Rock Paper Scissors EP.
FOR FANS OF: Hole, L7, Placebo.
Thekut.co.uk

OUR HOLLOW, OUR HOME

UK METALCORE THAT LEAVES YOU WANTING METAL-MORE

WHERE: Where the rugged land meets the foaming sea (Southampton).
WHY: Because they're real contenders in a genre that can be guilty of quantity over quality. Oh, and their songs have titles like Feast For The Crows.
LISTEN TO: Worms Wood, from debut album Hartsick.
FOR FANS OF: Bury Tomorrow, In Hearts Wake, Of Mice & Men.
Ourhollowourhome.com



PALISADES

THE GENRE-BENDING MISFITS!

FOR FANS OF: MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE, ISSUES, YOUNG GUNS

I RECOGNISE THIS LOT FROM ONE OF THOSE PUNK GOES POP ALBUMS...

Good spot! Palisades – R&B's answer to MCR (no, really!) – covered Pharrell Williams' Happy; 1,111,492 views on YouTube and counting. But they're about way more than that. For starters, frontman Louis Miceli was first inspired to make music by his opera-singing grandma. "She used to sing all of the time," recalls the vocalist. "Having her teach me those songs was my first realisation of the power of music." As he got older, inspiration came from the slightly-less operatic Taking Back Sunday. "I saw them at Warped Tour and that really lit the fire. I knew then that I had to play music for the rest of my life."

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM SAID REST OF THEIR LIVES, THEN?

The first order of business in 2017 is to release their self-titled third album, out January 20. "We put everything we had into it," says Louis, who counts Corey Taylor as a supporter: "He gave our new song Aggression a shoutout. He's such an influence on this band and that's a huge honour." With his backing, they plan to tour "as many countries as [they] can with it".

THAT ALL SOUNDS PRETTY SWEET...

Life on the road does have its downsides, mind. On one of their first tours, they were witness to a drive-by shooting – in Little Rock, Arkansas – that took the life of a young man ("It happened right in front of us; that was insanely scary," says the singer), and everyone in the band has struggled to maintain relationships due to life on the road ("It's really gruelling to love someone and be gone from them eight months out of the year"). Despite this, they continue to tour and play music that they hope will "bring people together". Look out for them at a show very soon. We're insanely hyped about this band.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: Everything-inspired rock tunes from New Jersey.
HEAR: Corey Taylor's favourite track, Aggression, on iTunes.
CHECK OUT: Their cover of Happy on Punk Goes Pop Vol. 6.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/wearepalisades

VUKOVI

THEY CALL IT 'NOISY POP-ROCK', WHICH IS BANG ON THE MONEY

WHERE: The band's four members hail from either Kilwinning or Troon, Scotland.
WHY: It's a cocktail of irresistible elements – poptastic vocals and huge but weirdy wobbly riffs.
LISTEN TO: Mighty singles Animal and La Di Da.
FOR FANS OF: Twin Atlantic, Paramore, The Slits.
Vukovi.co.uk

RED SUN RISING

FUN-LOVING HARD-ROCK THAT LIKES TO FLEX ITS MELODIC MUSCLES

WHERE: Akron, Ohio.
WHY: Currently *the* soundtrack to American rock radio. It could be absolutely enormous.
LISTEN TO: Major label debut Polyester Zeal.
FOR FANS OF: Stone Temple Pilots, Nickelback, Alter Bridge.
Redsunrisingmusic.com

TOO CLOSE TO TOUCH

POP-MEETS-POST-HARDCORE, EXECUTED WITH PANACHE

WHERE: Kentucky, USA.
WHY: They're touring with three of the most exciting bands around – Waterparks, Creeper and Chapel.
LISTEN TO: Last year's second album, Haven't Been Myself.
FOR FANS OF: Issues, The Word Alive, Emarosa.
Tooclosetotouch.com

DILLY DALLY

MOODY GRUNGE TO TURN UP LOUD

WHERE: Toronto, Canada.
WHY: Because the '90s were so great, you guys, and these lot sound like they just woke up after a 20-year nap.
LISTEN TO: 2015 album Sore, while we wait for a new one.
FOR FANS OF: Bully, Nirvana, Superheaven.
Dillydallyband.com

CAMP COPE

INDIE-PUNK WITH STRONG OPINIONS AND LOTS OF FEELINGS

WHERE: Melbourne, Australia, Down Under.
WHY: Georgia Maq's heartfelt lyrics are funny/important/powerful.
LISTEN TO: Their debut self-titled record out on Poison City Records.
FOR FANS OF: Throwing Muses, Belly, The Menzingers.
Campcope.bandcamp.com

THE HOTTEST NEW NAME IN INDIE-ROCK

DIET CIG

FOR FANS OF: WEEZER, THE FRONT BOTTOMS, THE BREEDERS

GO ON, THEN, WHO ARE THESE TWO?

This is Diet Cig, a super-fun indie-rock band based in Brooklyn, NY. Guitarist Alex Luciano calls their music 'slop pop', which in her words means, "Super-fun rocking pop music for people who aren't afraid to get a little sloppy." Whatever anyone wants to call it, it's light-hearted and catchy as hell. That's all that matters, right?

RAD. WHAT'S THEIR STORY?

They met at a house party, fittingly, where after hanging out all night, Noah (Bowman, drums) ended up giving Alex a tattoo the next day and from then on, they dove right into it. "We started playing some songs that I had written with Noah adding drums and a dynamic structure," Alex explains. "We barely knew how to play with each other but started playing shows anyway, and it was so much fun!" And it still is. In fact, being at a Diet Cig show is almost sickeningly fun. Alex bounds around the stage throwing high kicks every chance she gets, and they're both genuinely hilarious between songs. Add in the fact that they've got a bunch of brilliant songs to sing along to, and you're all set for a particularly lovely time.

AND WHAT DO THEY WANT THEIR MUSIC TO REPRESENT?

Positivity. That's what this band are all about. "We want listeners to feel like they can take back the shitty situations in their lives and turn them into something positive," says Alex. "Something they can navigate and harness for their own good. We're here for that cathartic scream-into-your-pillow moment and the feeling of relief afterwards. We want to achieve that feeling and let others feel it, too."

I'M SOLD. LET'S END WITH SOMETHING WEIRD ABOUT THEM, SHALL WE?

No problem. You know Guy Fieri, walking meme and mayor of Flavortown? Well Alex met him once and he told her, "Good luck with the band." If he backs 'em, so should you.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: Good-time indie-rock straight outta NYC.
HEAR: Dinner Date, their most recent single.
CHECK OUT: The debut album they have coming out this year.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/dietcigmusic

ESTRONS

FRANTIC, ANGULAR INDIE-ROCK WITH SHARP EDGES

WHERE: Cardiff.
WHY: You can dance to it, you can mosh to it, and you can wail along to it. What more do you want?
LISTEN TO: 2016 EP She's Here Now.
FOR FANS OF: Pixies, Interpol, Sleater-Kinney.
Soundcloud.com/estrons

VANT

GARAGE-ROCK WITH THAT RAREST OF THINGS: SOMETHING TO SAY

WHERE: London, though they keep it anti-Brexit by saying 'Planet Earth'.
WHY: Their songs deal with everything from immigration to people's boundaries.
LISTEN TO: Recent single Peace & Love.
FOR FANS OF: The Xcerts, Wolf Alice, Pixies.
Wearevant.com

BAD SIGN

A BRILLIANT BARRAGE OF FURIOUS RIFFS AND GIANT CHORUSES

WHERE: South Croydon, from the ends.
WHY: Good, honest rock music with some much-needed fire.
LISTEN TO: Latest single Intermission, out now through Basick Records.
FOR FANS OF: Every Time I Die, Biffy Clyro, Nirvana.
Facebook.com/badsignband

TOUGH TITS

THE BAND WITH THE BEST NAME IN THIS LIST

WHERE: Newcastle upon Tyne, but don't expect any Geordie accents.
WHY: Because they've got a fuzzbox and they're not afraid to use it.
LISTEN TO: The suggestively titled Hairless EP.
FOR FANS OF: Patti Smith, The Slits, The Fall.
Toughtits.bandcamp.com

WAGE WAR

METALCORE MOB STEP OUT OF THEIR PEERS' SHADOW

WHERE: Ocala, Florida – home of A Day To Remember.
WHY: Their ferocious live performances grabbed our attention on The Amity Affliction's recent UK tour.
LISTEN TO: Alive, the video for which recently reached 1,000,000 views.
FOR FANS OF: Beartooth, A Day To Remember, Blessthefall.
Wagewarband.com

THE NEW POP-PUNK MEGASTARS!

THE LAIRY PUNK-ROCK ODDBALLS!

SLOWCOACHES

FOR FANS OF: THE DISTILLERS, MUDHONEY, BIKINI KILL

LAIRY, YOU SAY?

Yeah. This lot pack more attitude than The Rock did in 1999. Vocalist Heather Perkins describes their sound as "loud, disposable and hooky" and she's not wrong. They just put out their debut album, Nothing Gives, and it rattles by in a haze of catchy melodies and punk sneering.

NICE. HOW'D THEY GET TOGETHER?

Same way all the best bands seem to come about: entirely by accident. "Me and Matty [Dixon, guitar] met in Leeds when we were both pretty poor, disillusioned and bored," Heather explains. "We first met outside a gig when I yelled across the street to Matty that he looked like Kurt Cobain. He told me to do one. Later on we bumped in to each other while he was skating down my street. We started hanging out and were pretty much inseparable for a long time after that."

AND THAT FRIENDSHIP LEAD INSTANTLY TO FORMING THE BAND?

Seems that way, yeah. At first it was, as Heather describes, "Pretty shambolic noise", but clearly the band improved at some point, because their album's tight in all the right places while gloriously slack in style. "We were all the oddball misfit kids at school," Heather continues, "and I guess music is something a lot of people gravitate to when they feel a bit on the outside, because it makes you feel that you belong, that you're not alone. So I guess it's only natural to then want to create that for yourself and others, too."

SOUND REASONING. ARE THEY DESTINED FOR BIG THINGS?

If there's any good left in the world. Heather's already had a taste of the fame to come, too. "I was in a taxi home drunk the other night," she says. "Our latest single came on the radio. I was so excited that I told the taxi driver to turn it up then called my mum to shout down the phone. So punk." Now doesn't that sound like the origin story of a superstar to you?

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: Punk-rock backbone given a hazy, shoegaze makeover.
HEAR: Nothing Gives' best track, Ex-Head.
CHECK OUT: Debut record, Nothing Gives, out now.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/slowcoachessux

SHOW ME THE BODY

THE SOUND OF PUNK-ROCK AND HIP-HOP MAKING SWEET, SWEET LOVE

WHERE: New York City.
WHY: Punk-rock energy and nihilistic hip-hop isn't paired often. On this evidence, it really should be.
LISTEN TO: Latest album Body War.
FOR FANS OF: Death Grips, Run The Jewels, Beastie Boys.
Showmethebody.com

THIN LIPS

SELF-AWARE EMO-PUNK STARS IN WAITING

WHERE: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
WHY: They're touring with Modern Baseball in February, which should see them be the next band to break out of the underground.
LISTEN TO: Brilliant album Riff Hard.
FOR FANS OF: Brand New, Thursday, Thrice.
Xxthinlipsxx.bandcamp.com

VIOLENT ARREST

HIGHLY ASTUTE, POLITICALLY-CHARGED PUNK-ROCK FURY

WHERE: Straight out of the West Country: Bristol.
WHY: Because this is full-throttle hardcore punk at its finest.
LISTEN TO: 2016's ferocious Authors Of Our Own Demise EP.
FOR FANS OF: Discharge, Minor Threat, Black Flag.
Violentarrest.bandcamp.com

BAD BREEDING

NEW TOWN DOOMY PUNK EXCELLENCE

WHERE: The Hertfordshire rock hotbed of Stevenage.
WHY: Nihilism has rarely had a better soundtrack than this.
LISTEN TO: Their self-titled record, released last year, available via their Tumblr page.
FOR FANS OF: The Jesus Lizard, Iceage, Pissed Jeans.
Anageofnothing.tumblr.com

BONES

DARK, EDGY ROCK WITH PUNK SENSIBILITIES

WHERE: London Town.
WHY: We heard Pretty Waste in the Orange Is The New Black season three trailer. We liked it. We wanted more. We still like it.
LISTEN TO: Jeff Beck's latest album Loud Hailer, which they co-wrote (!).
FOR FANS OF: PVRIS, Nine Inch Nails, Marmozets.
Bonesbandbones.com

MAKEOUT

FOR FANS OF: A DAY TO REMEMBER, FOUR YEAR STRONG, SUM 41

I RECOGNISE THE FACES BUT CAN'T PLACE THE NAME...

Don't blame ya, since this lot are in the middle of an admin change, switching their moniker from Trophy Wives to MAKEOUT. While the old band was "a pretty fun deal", frontman Sam Boxold says, there was always something missing – until the Providence pop-punks got in the studio to write their forthcoming record with legendary producer John Feldmann and "instantly, there was just something so incredibly huge about the way the music felt." He put them in touch with their new drummer Scott – all the way from Brisbane, Australia – and that's the story.

WHOA, WHOA, REWIND. WE NEED A BIT MORE INFO. HOW DID THEY START?

Pretty much when guitarist Tyler Young found an old guitar in his parents' basement, aged 13. "My parents were going through a divorce," he explains. "Playing guitar became an outlet for all of the confusion I was feeling and I'd spend hours in the basement playing until my fingers no longer let me. Over time I began to write my own songs and eventually joined a band with some kids I met on MySpace." Enter Sam and bassist Travis Danforth. "I still use music as my outlet for my emotions to this day. But now I want to help be a positive influence on people that need help or guidance getting through whatever is bringing them down in life."

WELL, THAT'S SWEET. WHY SHOULD I CHECK THEM OUT, THOUGH?

Well, the rock world already loves 'em. blink-182's Travis Barker is apparently a fan and bought the quartet dinner at his LA vegan restaurant, while Calum Hood and Ashton Irwin from 5SOS helped them write some tunes for the new record (release date TBC). Need one more reason? "GRAMMY. Award. Nominated. Production. Team! Or is that too arrogant?" laughs Scott. "But seriously, we make some decent tunes and you'll never know if you don't listen..." He has a point.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT: Rockstar-approved pop-punk from Providence, Rhode Island.
HEAR: Their old Trophy Wives tunes on YouTube, just to tide you over 'til the new stuff arrives.
CHECK OUT: Their forthcoming MAKEOUT album, when more details finally emerge.
MORE INFO: Facebook.com/trophywivesri

OLD WOUNDS

FURIOUS, SHIT-KICKING, VITAL HARDCORE

WHERE: New Jersey.
WHY: There's no better way to simulate getting your head kicked in than by putting this lot in your ears.
LISTEN TO: Most recent album The Suffering Spirit.
FOR FANS OF: Modern Life Is War, Converge, Gorilla Biscuits.
Oldwoundsnj.bandcamp.com

BELLEVUE DAYS

ROUSING, CHUGGING, SOARING HIGH-QUALITY ENGLISH ROCK

WHERE: South London.
WHY: They make a hell of a wallop with melodies to burn.
LISTEN TO: The Sad Boy EP, which isn't all that sad.
FOR FANS OF: Lower Than Atlantis, Twin Atlantic, We Are The Ocean.
Soundcloud.com/bellevue-days

CATTLE

PUMMELLING ART-ROCK THAT DOESN'T WANT TO BE YOUR FRIEND

WHERE: A no-nonsense band from a no-nonsense city: in this case, Leeds.
WHY: Because this level of alienation needs a hug.
LISTEN TO: Nature's Champion, released late last year.
FOR FANS OF: Crass, Saint Vitus, Sonic Youth.
Cattle.bandcamp.com

HMLTD

ORIGINAL AND REASSURINGLY ODD ALTERNATIVE ROCK

WHERE: London.
WHY: This is a band that are able to move through the gears with grace.
LISTEN TO: Last year's Stained / Is This What You Wanted EP.
FOR FANS OF: The White Stripes, Royal Blood, QOTSA.
Facebook.com/HMLTD

THE DECOY

MIGHTY WELSH MATH-ROCK

WHERE: Pontypool – home of Fireman Sam [*That was Pontypandy – Kids' TV Ed*]
WHY: You'll get value for money. The track Black Mountain Radio, for example, sounds like five songs in one.
LISTEN TO: Debut album Avalon.
FOR FANS OF: Biffy Clyro, Arcane Roots, Nirvana.
Facebook.com/TheDecoyUK

For the best in new music throughout 2017, don't miss **Fresh Blood** every week – only in Kerrang!

Three days on, Max was still chuckling at his own joke

This week

READER TAKEOVER!

YOU ME AT SIX

JOSH, MAX, DAN, CHRIS AND MATT ARE JUST THANKFUL THAT MEETING THEIR FANS THESE DAYS DOESN'T INVOLVE THE THREAT OF KIDNAPPING...

We're halfway through this week's Reader Takeover with You Me At Six when Josh Franceschi learns that only two of today's readers managed to score tickets for tonight's intimate show at London's Dingwalls before it sold out. He marches off, angry at the prospect. Minutes later, he's back with his tour manager, who is instructed to ensure every single person taking part gets an invitation on the band's personal guestlist. Whoever said 'Never meet your heroes', eh?

WHAT KIND OF TELEVISION SHOWS DO YOU GUYS END UP WATCHING TOGETHER?

EMMA, 24, GLASGOW

Matt Barnes (bass): "We've smashed through Westworld, Stranger Things, Narcos, Black Mirror..."
Josh Franceschi (vocals): "I've been watching Planet Earth. It's the best thing ever! When David Attenborough passes away, there should be a national holiday with a public funeral for everyone to pay their respects."
Dan Flint (drums): "He is the nation's grandad!"
Max Helyer (guitar): "The best parts for me have been the bear scratching his back, the lizard getting away from the snakes and the snow leopard face-planting. I watch loads of Come Dine With Me, as well, and I'll smash through a bit of First Dates, too!"

WHICH MEMBER OF THE BAND IS THE ONE THAT ALWAYS STARTS DRINKING FIRST?

JOANNE, 20, BIRMINGHAM

Josh: "We've been drinking since we were 12, just getting pissed in the park. But who's the worst?"
Dan: "I think we all know the answer to this question, Chris Miller!"
Chris Miller (guitar): "I'll start with a lager or a cider. Then maybe some whisky..."
Dan: "So: beer and whisky, then you'll feel frisky?"
Chris: "Not so much the next day. Sorry, guys!"

IF YOU WERE STRANDED ON A DESERT ISLAND, WHAT'S THE ONE THING YOU WOULD BRING WITH YOU?

CERYS, 18, CAMBRIDGE

Max: "A guitar, a never-ending spliff or a bottle of Jack Daniel's!"
Dan: "A helicopter, so I can leave. Sorry – but there was no rule specified here."
Josh: "I think I'd take my dog... and my fiancée. They come as one!"
Matt: "A football would be good – Tom Hanks proved you could pass time with that [*in the movie Cast Away – K! Cinema Ed*]."
Dan: "Can we just have all of the above after locating each other on said island?"

WOULD YOU EVER CONSIDER DOING A TAKE OFF YOUR COLOURS TOUR?

OLLIE, 25, BEDFORD

Max: "You've got to think, realistically, it might be [for] the 10-year anniversary of that album..."
Chris: "And we might do something special... probably."
Dan: "It'd more likely be a one-off show. We'll choose somewhere special and small. Maybe Leeds' stadium [Elland Road] or somewhere like that."
Matt: "40,000 people isn't enough. Let's do 100,000!"

WHAT'S THE WEIRDEST GIFT YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN BY A FAN?

ANDREA, 19, LONDON

Dan: "I once got two shit aprons. One says 'Dan: King Of The Kitchen' and the other says 'Boomtown' across it. You can find them in my house."
Chris: "Someone gave me lube once, that was weird..."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"WE USED TO GET CAKES THAT SAID, 'I'M GOING TO KIDNAP YOU'!"

● JOSH FRANCESCHI ●

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Max: "I got an apple pie once, in McDonald's. That's better than lube, I think."
Josh: "We used to get weird shit, like cakes with messages on them. Like, 'I'm going to kidnap you'!"
Matt: "Or, 'Have you used my lube yet?' That's always a good one."

WHO'D PLAY YOU IN A YOU ME AT SIX MOVIE?

CAITLIN, 16, SHEFFIELD

Josh: "Dan will blatantly go for Ryan Gosling. It shows what he thinks of himself!"
Dan: "Of course it'd have to be someone immaculately good-looking like Gosling for me. I reckon Matt would be James Franco... he's got a bit of that going on."
Chris: "Who plays Frank Gallagher in Shameless?"
Max: "Everyone says I look like Seth Rogen, so him."
Josh: "I'll say the Academy Award-winner Leonardo DiCaprio. He's into the same shit I'm into, like saving the planet and not being a dickhead!"

YOU RECORDED NIGHT PEOPLE IN NASHVILLE. WHAT WAS IT LIKE THERE COMPARED TO YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES?

TOBY, 21, GUILDFORD

Max: "We were lucky with [early producers] John Mitchell and Matt O'Grady, as we all got on and could hang out. But looking at the GRAMMYs [Night People producer] Jacquire King had, and seeing Kings Of Leon, Tom Waits and Pharrell recorded in the same studio... We were looking at one of the best in the world."
Josh: "When we were younger in LA, it was easy to get caught up in all the hangouts. You make friends, go to clubs. It's intoxicating, and I think a by-product of that was maybe complacency. The main thing about Nashville was seeing all of us so focused and determined at the same time. It felt bigger than anything we'd tried before."

IF YOU WERE IN GAME OF THRONES, WHICH HOUSE WOULD YOU BE IN?

KATHERINE, 21, CHELTENHAM

Max: "I watched the first series back in 2009 but I stopped watching it... The House Of Max?"
Josh: "You definitely look a lot like John Snow. So I guess you'd be on whatever team he plays for!"
Dan: "Who's the guy that made his own house and banner, cut his finger off... Davos! He came from the bottom and got in there. We'd join him!"

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR PLAN IN A ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE?

LUCY-JAYNE, 18, DONCASTER

Josh: "It feels like we're living in it right now, to be honest..."
Dan: "If everything had gone to shit, you'd want to be around people that make you laugh. So I think we should build a big Noah's Ark kinda thing and we all head off to some island with our parents, friends, animals, whatever. We could just watch the world explode, chilling there while drinking piña coladas."
Max: "It depends if they're Walking Dead zombies or Shaun Of The Dead zombies, which is more like, 'Let's go to the Winchester, have a pint, and wait for this to blow over.' In fact, let's go there now. Fuck tonight's show!"

The next Reader Takeover will be... ***The Amity Affliction!***

INTERVIEW HOST: AMIT SHARMA **PHOTOS:** IAN COLLINS

LIVES

RATINGS
KKKKK = CLASSIC
KKKK = EXCELLENT
KKK = GOOD
KK = AVERAGE
K = POOR

TWIN ATLANTIC

PLUS: PULLED APART BY HORSES, FANGCLUB

BARROWLANDS, GLASGOW. 13 – 15.12.16

KKKKK

SCOTLAND'S HOTTEST CAP THEIR TRIUMPHANT 2016 WITH A MAGNIFICENT THREE-NIGHT HOMECOMING

WORDS: SAM LAW **PHOTOS:** STEPHEN KYLE

TUESDAY!

"AT THE end of 2016, Twin Atlantic faced a choice," Sam McTrusty explains. "We could've returned to the [SSE] Hydro Arena. Instead we opted for another three nights – our sixth, seventh and eighth – at The Barrowlands." In the sweaty afterglow of tonight's raucous first outing of this three-night stand at the 2,100-capacity Barras, it's hard to disagree with the decision. Across these shows, it feels like an ever-growing party, one where Twin host simply three of the best shows they've ever played. And where better to punctuate this band's coming-of-age, than the no-nonsense nightspot they've cherished since childhood?

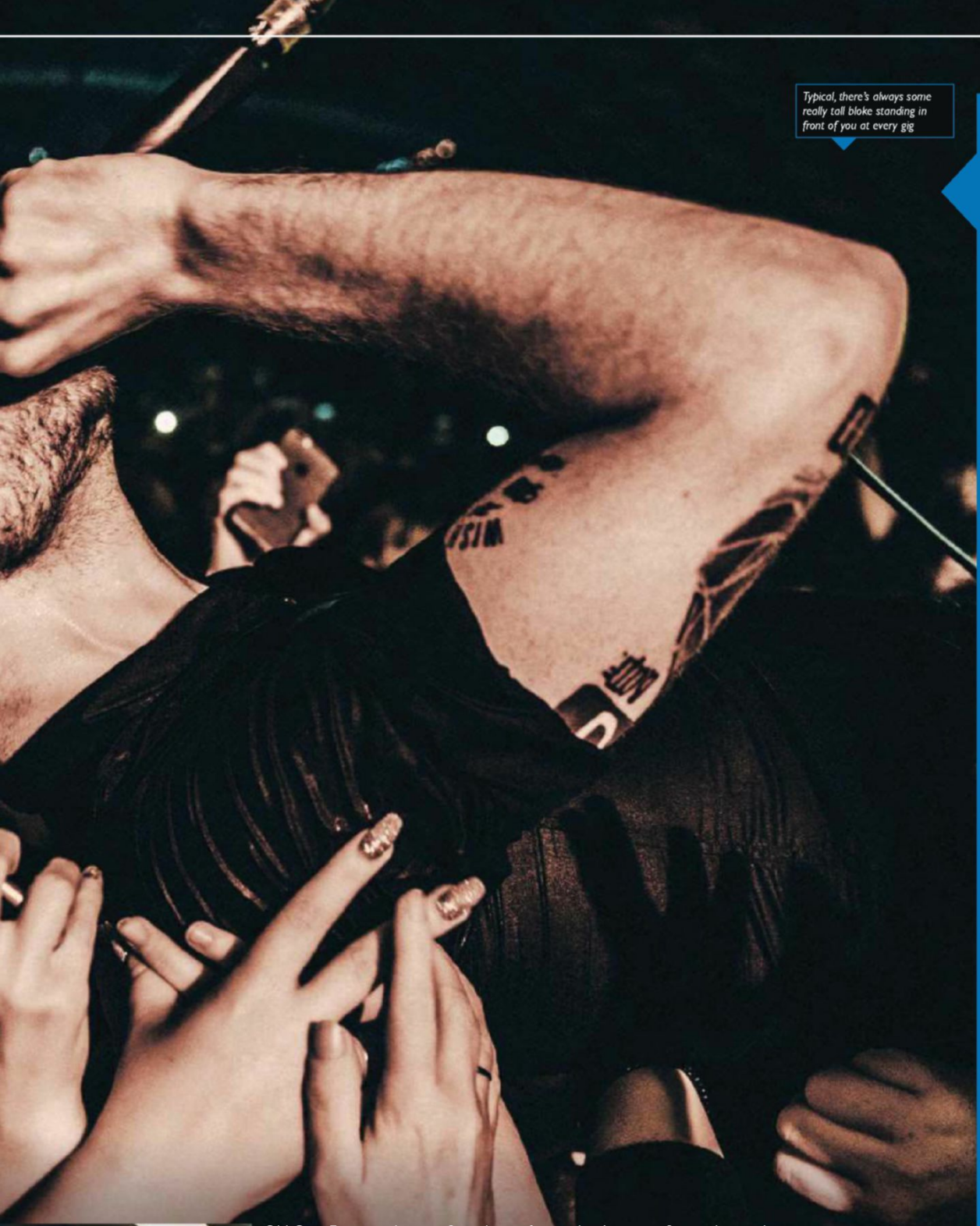
The band's friends have gathered tonight. Select family, too – though Sam's grandfather, 'Big George' McTrusty, and much of the rest of the clan save themselves for closing night. But even though there's two nights to follow, you feel for those absent tonight. They're missing out as the crowd deafeningly match every lyric in Sam's distinctive burr. And, bathed in retina-blistering red, with Gold Elephant: Cherry Alligator, You Are The Devil and The Chaser packing in more strangeness and swagger than Twin managed in their first three albums, and a stomping Valhalla putting some bounce in Barras' famous sprung dance floor, their selection of venue suddenly seems forehead-smackingly obvious. But from here, things somehow manage to only get better…

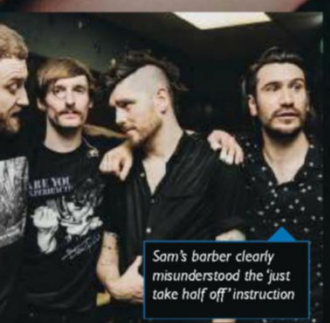
WEDNESDAY!

Night two, and yesterday's victory has carried over into this evening's jubilant vibes. "It's like some sort of awesome Groundhog Day, playing here three nights in a row!" concurs Pulled Apart By Horses' Tom Hudson, buzzing halfway through his band's riff-tacular set. Alongside grunge-tastic Dublin garage-rockers Fangclub (vividly retrofied, fuzzily excellent), the Leeds lot put in a corn-popping warm-up shift. Regardless, though, of all the serrated groove baked into Lizard Baby and The Haze, won't transcend their support-band billing. Not with a mohawked Sam McTrusty prowling Scotland's most iconic stage, comfortably looking like he owns the place, with friends and family looking on from the wings. "Without our friends, we're fuck all," he declares, pride dripping like perspiration. "Without our family we wouldn't even be here!"

Tonight, older material finds fresh perspective, with the cluster aired from Vivarium – Human After All and

Typical, there's always some really tall bloke standing in front of you at every gig





Sam's barber clearly misunderstood the 'just take half off' instruction

Old Grey Face tonight, – dusting-off a forgotten angularity, while Crash Land is simply taken from Sam by the audience, his Glaswegian congregation relishing its pessimistic melody and '*We're fucked!*' refrain at truly cacophonous volume.

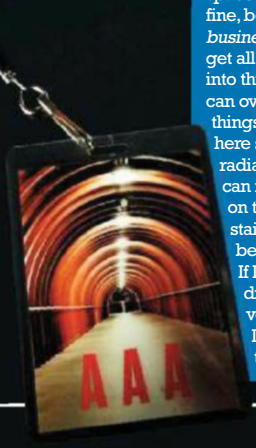
In the dressing room, it's another joyous post-match celebration, "If I could take this place on tour with me every night," grins Sam, "I would!"

THURSDAY!

The final night, and Twin Atlantic close things in elation, exhaustion, outright chaos. '*I took you for granted / Stayed away for too long*', swoons Sam to his mother city, unfurling a soul-soaked Mothertongue, alone onstage, in tribute to the gritty, game texture of a hometown history into which his band are now ingrained. It's the emotional apex of an incredible, ecstatic, grander-than-grand finale. A skyscraping Whispers comes capped with drifting emotion, Hold On surges with positivist defiance, Ex El pulsates with all the outsized attitude its name demands, and as a ceiling-smashing climax, No Sleep splits the speakers and detonates the crowd.

Having lost a shoe and emptied his last reserves tumbling into the parting fray, we find Sam post-show, laid out in the dressing room, sipping Lucozade as champagne corks pop in the background. He's physically fatigued, emotionally spent.

"I just left everything out there," the singer manages to say through a grin the size of the Glasgow bridge. Across this emphatic, affirmative triple-bill, so did everyone else, mate.



STAR SHOUT!

SAM McTRUSTY

(TWIN ATLANTIC, VOCALS/GUITAR)

THAT WAS PRETTY SPECIAL, WASN'T IT?

"I feel totally fucked! It's almost embarrassing – I have so little energy coming off! Was it good? I barely know – I have so little left in the tank! But it's humbling to be accepted by the people in your own home with that level of commitment, to see the looks on people's faces. Guys in their 50s, teenage girls, guys in their 20s in black T-shirts just like us. I woke up today [Thursday], and had barely any voice. We were saying pre-show that we might need to pull this one, but I got through on sheer adrenaline."

THREE NIGHTS AT THE BARROWLANDS IS A HUGE COMMITMENT. WHAT SET EACH OF THE SHOWS APART?

"Well, Tuesday was the night most of my friends and peers were here. Wednesday was when my family started to show up. Then on Thursday they *really* arrived. In a way, Tuesday was the most nervous – and we were tackling some technical nightmares in the background. But with my friends there, having a laugh, I was able to enjoy myself. It used to be that I'd have my heart on my sleeve explaining when things were going wrong, but as I've gotten more experienced I'm able to hide it better! On top of that, it was our sixth time here, so we couldn't be too nervous."

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT THIS VENUE TO YOU?

"It feels important to show that this is a turning point for this band, and that needs to be seen up close and personal. On top of that, it's about the history, the atmosphere. It's not under corporate management, sponsored by some telephone company. It's got this energy. And the place is artist-friendly. A lot of venues are almost airline-like in their space management, which is fine, because this is a music *business*. But we're able to get all our family and friends into this dressing room! You can overlook the fact the only things that have changed here since the '60s are the radiators and the WiFi. You can ignore the gaffer-tape on the seats and the heat stains around the heaters because of those qualities. If I could take the Barras dressing rooms to every venue we play, I would. It's 'brilliantly shit', in a totally not-shit way."

LIVES

BIFFY CLYRO

PLUS: BRAND NEW

O2 ARENA, LONDON. 08.12.16

KKKKK

"NICE ENORMODOME, WE'LL TAKE IT" SAYS SCOTTISH POWERHOUSE

WORDS: IAN WINWOOD **PHOTOS:** PAUL HARRIES

Simon was beginning to regret setting his guitar strap quite so high

STAR SHOUT!

SIMON NEIL
(BIFFY CLYRO, VOCALS/GUITAR)

HOW WAS YOUR EVENING, SIMON?
"It was just great for us. I don't want to sound conceited, but it was just one of those evenings where everything came together and felt perfect."

THE FIRST TIME YOU HEADLINED THE O2, YOU FOUND IT A STILTED EXPERIENCE...
"Well, the problem then was that the stage show we had meant there was a divide in the audience and I felt that we weren't connecting with people in the way that I wanted us to. Plus, I wasn't in a good headspace at the time... But this time I'd decided beforehand that I was going to make the most of the experience, and that we were just going to be the band that we are in this kind of venue."

AS THE band that pirouettes on the line that divides alternative music from its mainstream equivalent better than anyone else, it's no surprise that Biffy Clyro have their own take on the Arena Experience. The trio's second appearance at Britain's biggest shed provides a suitably impactful yet uncommonly considered interpretation – sometimes a subversion – of rock as it exists in this kind of enormodome. In terms of a spectacle in the service of songs, it is a triumph.

We'll get to that. Openers Brand New also provide an unusual approach to the arena experience – which is to say, they have no approach at all. The New Yorkers' 45-minute set is not so much a performance as it is an installation; throughout, the group remain under-lit to the point of obscurity while playing thoughtfully-constructed songs that, in this context, could use a spot of jollying up. They are, however, nonetheless intriguing.

On a stage that is part optical illusion and part engineering masterstroke, Biffy Clyro twist and contort like men wired to the National Grid. And despite a bounty of melodies capable of capturing the imagination of a child, the band's music remains reassuringly challenging. Tonight drummer Ben Johnston and bassist James Johnston – a rhythm section without parallel – pull the two-hour set through more time changes than a Southern rail commuter service, while with high-slung Stratocasters in various colours, frontman Simon Neil is Jesus Of Nazareth by way of Timeless Tattoos, Glasgow. Indeed, a man once ill at ease speaking to an audience is these days transformed into an outrageous flirt. Placed together, this equates to a band who once never dreamed of appearing on a stage such as this now appearing born to do it.

The performance is delivered on Biffy Clyro's own terms – with arena tropes such as encore breaks and band-introductions totally eschewed – and rightly so. Again rightly so, last year's Ellipsis album is heavily represented, with space being made at the expense of God & Satan. This is a shame. But despite their infancy, songs such as Wolves Of Winter and Re-arrange sound as secure and significant as standards like The Captain, Living Is A Problem Because Everything Dies and, of course, Many Of Horror. With Bubbles, the band give vent to the pop instinct that always coursed through their veins, while on 9/15ths they give voice to the sheer *weirdness* that serves as its counterbalance.

Both charismatic yet enigmatic, mainstream yet alternative, insiders *and* outsiders, Biffy Clyro's uncorrupted, complicated talent is tonight translated into the O2's often impersonal space with fluency and grace. Roll on Download.

Brand New got to London for the Chelsea Flower Show REALLY early

FAN SHOUT!

LEONARD HENWOOD
HORNCHURCH
"Tonight was great. I loved the lights, they were awesome. And the band were really loud, too. This is the first time I've seen them, and my favourite song was Animal Style. I think this was the best concert I've ever been to."

ELLIE MARY CRAWLEY
"I thought it was a really great show, and I thought Many Of Horror was the best song. The only thing I would say is that they should have done an encore. I would have liked to have heard God & Satan, too."

AGAINST ME!

PLUS: MILK TEETH

ELECTRIC BALLROOM, LONDON. 08.12.16

KKKKK

THE TRUE TRANS SOUL REBELS BEAT THE 2016 BLUES WITH PERFECT, POSITIVE SWAGGER

NO-ONE SEEMED to leave 2016 better than they went in. Except Laura Jane Grace. In the space of a year she's toured, written and released her heartbreaking and honest memoirs, Tranny, and released seventh full-length Shape Shift With Me. Last time she was in this venue, Against Me! played a career-defining show, performing Transgender Dysphoria Blues to a crowd ready to hear her survival story. This time, it's all about just *living*.

Warming a crowd that are already bubbling over are Milk Teeth, back after a break and clearly re-energised. Filling the room with their whirring grunge punk, Becky Blomfield is an even stronger, confident presence onstage than before.

When Laura and Against Me! casually come onstage grinning, it's as if they've never left. Part product of being a legit touring musician, with Against Me! you know exactly what you're going to get – minimal chat, bar pithy two-liners and record-perfect songs to air-punch and scream your heart out to. First out is her anthem, True Trans Soul Rebel, which runs immediately into new track 333, which seamlessly fits in, a heartfelt song that already feels classic.

"Hopefully some of you want to hear some new songs but we're aware you want some old ones, too," Laura laughs. The balance is perfect, cutting between old gruff punk for longtime fans to smash heads to and poppier Shape Shift With Me tracks, Crash and Rebecca, which Laura takes clear delight in sharing. Happier than ever, tossing her sweaty mane around, the mood is contagious. "London, you never disappoint," she says. The feeling is very much mutual. Fun, freeing, everything you'd want from Against Me!, this is just another brilliant, joyous show that proves Laura Jane Grace is a punk icon who will genuinely go down in the history books.

WORDS: HANNAH EWENS **PHOTOS:** CHRIS CASEY

You know when you sing so hard little red stars burst out of your head? That…

Milk Teeth: Hair-raising

STAR SHOUT!

LAURA JANE GRACE

(AGAINST ME!, VOCALS/GUITAR)

YOU'RE ALWAYS SMILING ONSTAGE! WHAT WERE YOU GRINNING ABOUT TONIGHT?

"It's a little bit of a competition between me and Inge [Johansson, bass]! No, there's no big secret, other than we're having fun. We're smiling about the show – that's the whole point of being here. It's been a good day, but we just went to Whole Foods, had soundcheck, I had a really epic nap, but it's really not exciting. Really, I'm just happy to see all those faces."

WHAT MAKES LONDON SHOWS SO SPECIAL?

"They're a really unstuffy crowd, especially tonight. There were bodies flying, everyone was clapping, jumping up and down. It's fun, that's where the smiles are from."

PWR BTTM

PLUS: THE SPOOK SCHOOL

THE SHACKLEWELL ARMS, LONDON. 06.12.16

KKKK

NEW YORK QUEER-PUNK TRAILBLAZERS BRING THE POWER TO LONDON

AFTER A year that's been particularly tough on the LGBT community, that PWR BTTM proudly represent, tonight feels important. Unsurprisingly, awash with the colour and copious amounts of glitter that the queer-punk duo encourage from their audiences, the sold-out back room of this East London pub is buzzing in anticipation of seeing them play the city for the first time. To whet the appetite, Edinburgh's The Spook School pack an arsenal of indie-pop bangers and get people dancing early. It's a perfect precursor to what follows, and what follows is phenomenal. PWR BTTM's 16-song set is so full of joy and hilarity – Ben Hopkins and Liv Bruce are two of the funniest people on the planet – that it absolutely flies by. Early in the set, Dairy Queen and I Wanna Boi inspire sing-alongs far louder than the hundred or so in attendance should ever be able to muster up, and not for a moment do the band, nor audience, let up on their sheer enthusiasm. This is more than just goodwill and eagerness, however, because PWR BTTM are impeccable musicians and a flawlessly tight live unit. And that's no easy feat when you're playing songs as technically impressive as Ugly Cherries and switching instruments repeatedly. That, combined with the euphoric atmosphere they create, make this band one of the most must-see live acts around right now. Recently, a homophobic hate group protested one of PWR BTTM's U.S. shows, but tonight is nothing but love. The band have adopted the phrase 'Queer is invincible' as an unofficial slogan and, on tonight's evidence, that couldn't be more true.

RYAN DE FREITAS

VANT

SCALA, LONDON. 29.11.16

KKKK

ROCKERS TO WATCH IN 2017 JUSTIFY THE HYPE AT TREMENDOUS HEADLINE SHOW

A VANT gig isn't an event *quite* yet. It is – as anyone who caught them supporting You Me At Six's UK run in October can attest – an opportunity to catch a band sure to make a big noise next year before success catapults them to the other side of intimacy. They list 'Planet Earth' as their hometown on Facebook, which is easiest, as despite being London-based they're from all over the shop – and their sound is equally tough to pin down. So while the swinging psychedelic Lampoon recalls the Pixies, the propulsive Parasite is more akin to The Wildhearts – though these seemingly disparate ditties have irresistibility and tightness of execution in common. The quartet also have something to say literally as well as musically: with singer-guitarist Mattie Vant stating that Parking Lot is about "understanding people's boundaries", so women being touched inappropriately at gigs needs to be "kicked out fucking immediately". And, he continues, in this "consumerist world" fans need to come to Vant's shows, lest they want another "faceless popstar" to hog the limelight. Thankfully, tunes like Karma Seeker and closer Do You Know Me? make a strong case for this crowd to return for their UK tour in February/March, by which time debut album, Dumb Blood, will have been released – taking Mattie and co. a step closer to their desire to "change the world". Well, with a performance like this, they're certainly headed in the right direction.

JAMES HICKIE

Rogue bit of Lego on the stage monitor got the better of Caleb's foot

STAR SHOUT!

CALEB SHOMO

(BEARTOOTH, VOCALS)

YOU SAID THAT WAS ONE OF YOUR FAVOURITE SHOWS EVER. WHY'S THAT?

"It was just the most free – I wasn't thinking about anything other than just fucking enjoying myself. It was insanity. Everybody there just seemed like they were having so much fun."

THIS IS YOUR 74TH DATE ON THE ROAD, HOW DO YOU PSYCHE YOURSELF UP FOR EACH SHOW?

"You've got to love what you do. That's the only way. Stepping out on that stage is my drug. There's no other high in the world like it."

BEARTOOTH

PLUS: VANNA, TRASH BOAT

O2 SHEPHERD'S BUSH EMPIRE, LONDON. 08.12.16

KKKK

BEARTOOTH COME OF AGE IN TRULY AGGRESSIVE STYLE

WORDS: TOM SHEPHERD **PHOTOS:** GOBINDER JHITTA

IT'S IMPORTANT to be angry, now and then. Politically, socially, personally, anger can be a refuge, a tool, and, almost always, a release. And anger can bring people together. Stood in front of a restless crowd that have been treating the O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire's dance floor like a human pinball machine, Caleb Shomo stresses the importance of lancing that anger from time to time; of not letting it fester inside. For those looking up at the Beartooth frontman – watching a band that has come of age since they last toured these shores; a band that looks tighter, stronger, angrier than they did a year ago – they've found the perfect way to let go.

Opening tonight are two bands that offer two opposing sides to Beartooth's genetic make-up. Beartooth Yin and Yang, if you will. Tapping into their hardcore pop-punk sound are St Albans' Trash Boat – a band who screw up their faces and really seem to live every note they play, but a band who are let down by a foggy sound tonight nevertheless. Then, with a nod to the headliner's heavier chugs, we have Boston's Vanna. The band's whirlwind metal is capped by their singer Davey Muise's swashbuckling bravado, and is inescapably fun.

A sense of camaraderie takes the room hostage as soon as Beartooth arrive, as Caleb rips through black-sheep songs about depression, anxiety and alcoholism. Not only do cuts from last year's Aggressive add a fresh dynamic to the set list, but certain tracks have elements dialed-up to help them hit harder. "Do we have any metalheads in tonight?" asks Caleb before a cannonball-heavy rendition of I Have A Problem. "We got any fans of rock'n'roll?" he teases ahead of a particularly bluesy Rock Is Dead. It's a bracing approach to their genre-spliced sound, and exemplifies the brains that Beartooth have now added to their brawn throughout this emphatically powerful set. And that's nothing to be angry about.

Beartooth's guitar lessons were really full-on

REVIEWS

RATINGS
KKKKK = CLASSIC
KKKK = EXCELLENT
KKK = GOOD
KK = AVERAGE
K = POOR

AFI

AFI (THE BLOOD ALBUM) *(CONCORD)*

KKKKK

AFI'S 10TH ALBUM BEAUTIFULLY DISTILS THE MANY FACES OF ITS CREATORS

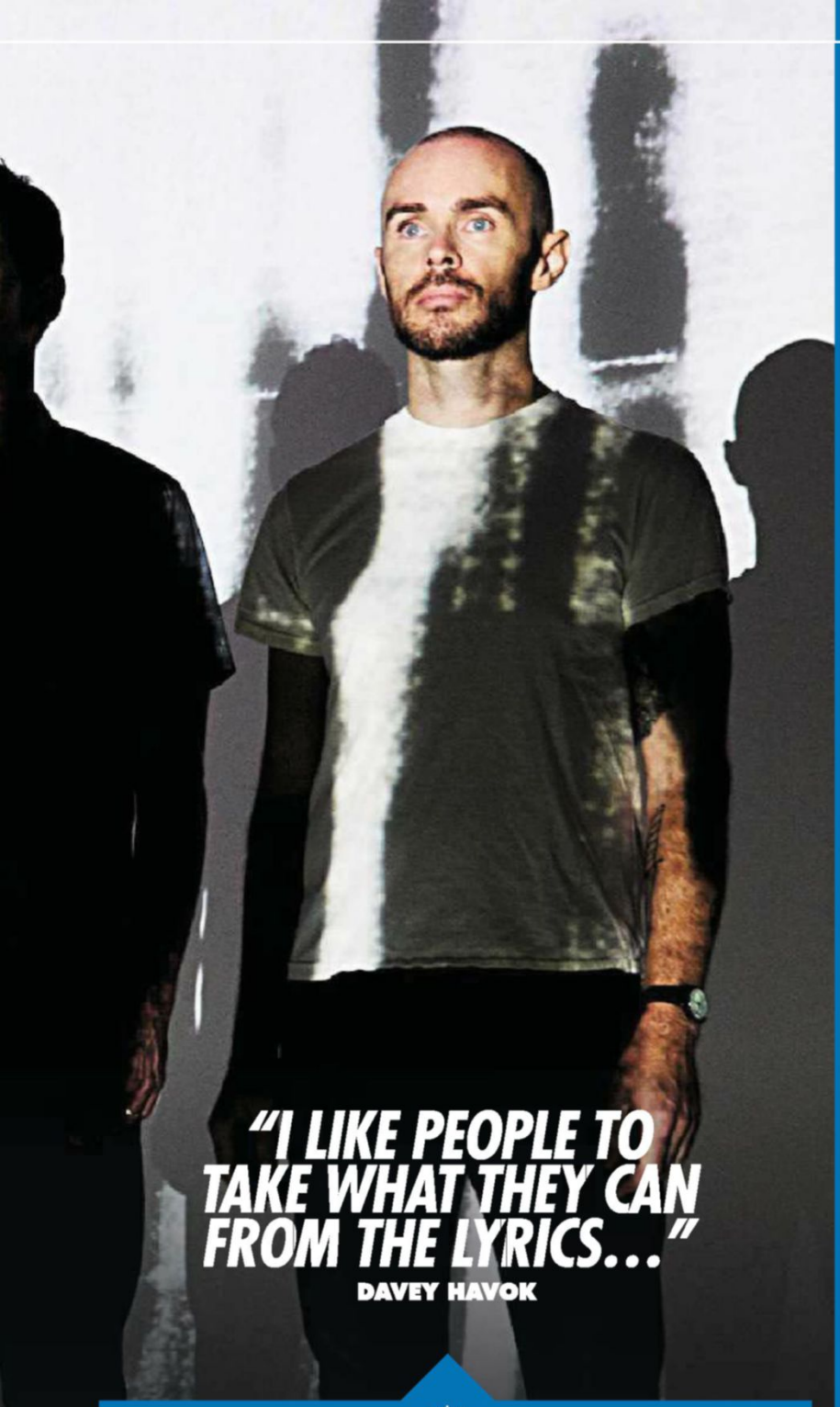
GIVEN THAT the words '*Through our bleeding we are one*', taken from their 1999 track Strength Through Wounding, have long been a pre-gig chant at AFI shows, are we to assume that this record – boldly subtitled The Blood Album – is intended as the Californian goth-punks' definitive statement? And, if so, just how many bands could manage such a feat 10 albums and 25 years into a career? Particularly one as storied as AFI's.

The fact that this *is* such a successfully comprehensive document suggests AFI are aware that theirs is a career completely navigable by its musical evolution, and have somehow successfully consolidated the expectations of fans at whichever point they first came under the band's spell. So if, say, you were an early adopter that longs for the pulverising punk styling of Black Sails In The Sunset, from which that opening mantra was culled, you might find opener Dark Snow's big Muse-ish sonic swathes a grandiose maturation too far. But if that's the case, you'll almost certainly find solace in Hidden Knives' serrated embrace, or the bruising, tumbling gang vocals of Dumb Kids or Pink Eyes.

If, however, you yearn for the lusher landscapes heralded by 2003's big, polished Sing The Sorrow, then get ready to travel to the next base camp in their ascent. There's Snow Cats, which finds arch aesthete Davey Havok waiting for someone while '*Dressed in Himalayan white*', and sounds like Brand New's Okay I Believe You, But My Tommy Gun Don't paired with delicious hooks. Or Feed From The Floor which, like the aforementioned Dark Snow explicitly showcases the omnipresent influence of The Cure with its lush atmospherics and glacial vocals.

And just when you think every facet of AFI has been majestically touched upon, along comes closing track The Wind That Carries Me Away, which provides an exciting teaser for the further musical adventures of these cult heroes. A cocktail of dark blues, Jane's Addiction-esque basslines and an airy chorus complete with a vocal performance so good that it gives the listener the sensation of soaring, it certainly raises expectations for AFI's *next* quarter of a century. In the shorter term, however, you better get ready to start your 'Best Albums of 2017' list – a serious contender has arrived.

DOWNLOAD: The Wind That Carries Me Away.
FOR FANS OF: Alkaline Trio, Creeper.
JAMES HICKIE



"I LIKE PEOPLE TO TAKE WHAT THEY CAN FROM THE LYRICS..."

DAVEY HAVOK

THE INSIDER

DAVEY HAVOK

(VOCALS)

WHAT ARE THE MAIN THEMES OF THE ALBUM, DAVEY?

"Well, I don't like to get too specific, because I really like people to take whatever they need from the lyrics. A lot of the themes running through the record deal with the human connection: both the perception of connection and the misperception of connection. Snow Cats, for example, deals with identity and power and control within a relationship, on a personal level."

DARK SNOW IS A BIG, BOLD OPENER. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT IT?

"I think it's the perfect way to open, and I'm so glad that it's opening the record. It's such a rich, lush, moody song that also has an anthemic chorus in the same way that Snow Cats does, and it really dives straight in to themes of identity, severance and transformation. It's very indicative of who AFI are at this moment."

HIDDEN KNIVES IS A COOL, OLD-SCHOOL PUNK SONG, AND HAS A VERY LOADED TITLE. ARE THESE KNIVES REAL OR EMOTIONAL?

"People can really interpret the knives literally or figuratively. This song touches on themes of habitual self-destructive behaviour and fragility, which really harkens back to themes that you will have seen reoccur in many of my lyrics over the years. If people relate to what I write in general, they'll probably relate to this album as well."

TRACK BY TRACK

WSTR

RED, GREEN OR INBETWEEN *(NO SLEEP)*

KKKK

RISING LIVERPUDLIAN POP-PUNKS DELIVER THE GOODS AND THE FEELS ON STRIKING DEBUT

1 FEATHERWEIGHT
Straight off the bat, Liverpool's WSTR make no apologies for the kind of music they're making. Their strain of pop-punk might be within touching distance of the '90s nostalgia that Neck Deep channel, but with the melodies as sweet as they are on this opener, we're not even mad.

2 FOOTPRINTS
By the band's own admission, this is a bit of a sad boy record – with front-guy Sammy Clifford mostly preoccupied with girl stuff, dead-end town stuff and hard-luck stuff. But it doesn't really matter when you've got hooks as big as the moon.

3 GOBSHITE
We all know that all proper pop-punk records have a sub-minute, bullet-fast, what-a-bloody-laugh-we-are track. This is that.

4 LONELY SMILES
Things get introspective, as a euphoric chorus melts away into a bittersweet brooding middle. Feelings!

5 NAIL THE CASKET
An angst-crammed verse that The Story So Far would be proud of runs into a hook-laden chorus that New Found Glory would be proud of.

6 EASTBOUND & DOWN
'*You're better off without me anyway*', croons Sammy over a song that stacks layer upon layer until it hits an *a cappella* finale. Oooh, fancy.

7 KING'S CUP
A song with such a fast-paced, feel-good temperament you'd never know that Sammy's actually giving a candid run-through of the time he broke his neck after getting bucked off a donkey while he was drunk in California. LOLZ!

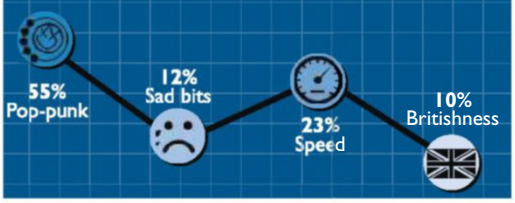
8 THE LAST RIDE
This. Record. Needs. To. Slow. Down. Or. We're. Going. To. Be. Sick.

9 HIGHTAIL
A huge instrumental build-up delivers the emo-wallop here.

10 PENULTIMATE
A proper grouch-fest, this one, but it levels out with an acoustic outro.

11 PUNCHLINE
And so it goes, the track with the warmest tones sees the record out. This record might be one that magpies from some of pop-punk's elder statesmen, but the songwriting consistency here makes this a bold, vibrant and killer debut.

THIS ALBUM IS MOSTLY MADE UP OF...



WORDS: TOM SHEPHERD

PAIN OF SALVATION

IN THE PASSING LIGHT OF DAY *(INSIDE OUT)*

KKKK

SWEDISH PROG METALLERS STARE MORTALITY IN THE FACE IN WIDDLY STYLE

IT OPENS with a song called On A Tuesday, but Pain Of Salvation are not singing about putting the bins out. Serious band are particularly serious this time out, and with good reason. A concept album like all their releases, this one revolves around mainman Daniel Gildenlöw's experience with an illness that nearly killed him, and the thoughts and feelings of a man facing the abyss. The music matches the sombre subject matter, with lots of funereal piano, existential balladry and distorted riffs bristling with anger. The rhythms are awkward and disjointed and the momentum ebbs and flows. The whole album is challenging, but there's a cerebral intensity to it that's hard to ignore.

DOWNLOAD: Tongue Of God.
FOR FANS OF: Opeth, Dream Theater.

PAUL TRAVERS

HUNTER KILL HUNTER

II *(HKH)*

KKK

EMOTIONAL LONDON ROCKERS TAKE AIM AT GREATNESS ON SECOND EP

WHEN HUNTER Kill Hunter focus on their target, they're capable of hitting the bullseye, a fact proven as soon as Too Much To Take roars into earshot. This great tune charges ahead with surging riffs, while its hooks come so thick and fast they practically tumble over each other. More confirmed kills are in evidence in the shape of punchy lead single We Are The Blame and the EP's most furious offering, Sinking From Within. Admittedly, where these impressive beasts display a decent interbreeding of heaviness and melody, some of Hunter Kill Hunter's other tracks miss their mark. However, there's enough potential and ambition here to prevent this London mob from sabotaging their own hunt; bigger things surely beckon.

DOWNLOAD: Too Much To Take.
FOR FANS OF: Finch, Funeral For A Friend.

OLLY THOMAS

THE BOTTOM LINE

I STILL HATE YOU *(THE BOTTOM LINE)*

KKKK

LONDON POP-PUNKS STILL HATE US, BUT THERE'S PLENTY TO LOVE ABOUT THEM

POP-PUNK DOESN'T need defending. Not really. Because – done right – there are few musical formulas in existence more immediately appealing than the combination of high energy, honest attitude and honeyed melody. It's a point as abundantly evident in the resurgence of board-shorted originals like blink-182 and Good Charlotte as in the rise of meat-and-potatoes revivalists Neck Deep and State Champs. Snapping at those outfits' heels, London-based upstarts The Bottom Line are back with another five tracks time-warped in from some lost Tony Hawk's Pro Skater soundtrack. That's no insult, mind, because from 100mph single Pull Me Out, to the sepia-tinged swing of the title-track, these are songs loaded with all the sweet self-belief that made this genre great from the start.

DOWNLOAD: Pull Me Out.
FOR FANS OF: Simple Plan, Neck Deep.

SAM LAW

Ambitions

LYRIC OF THE WEEK

'Drag me all the way to hell 'cause I'm never gonna let it go!'

Have you ever been fishing with ONE OK ROCK? They are stubborn. They get a bite, and then they'll wrestle it for hours, preferring to fall into the River Styx, pulled under by their catch, than surrender it. It says here…

BAND: ONE OK ROCK
SONG: Taking Off
ALBUM: Ambitions

SLEEVE OF THE WEEK

As Lions have clearly spent their budget wisely. They've got themselves a painted skull to go on the cover of their new Selfish Age album, which presumably has a high re-sale value among art folks looking for something a bit Damien Hirst-ish. Maybe.

VIDEO OF THE WEEK

LEAVING NOTICE, ROAM

Careful there, you may get covered in the sweat being flung out of this video if you sit too close to your screen. If you're really unlucky, a stagediver might land in your lap.

SEPULTURA

MACHINE MESSIAH *(NUCLEAR BLAST)*

KKKK

MORE GLOWERING, METALLIC GOODNESS FROM THE BRAZILIAN LEGENDS

IN THEIR long career, Sepultura have never been scared to take risks, deviating from cliché wherever possible. Inspired by the fertile Scandinavian scene, they decamped to Sweden for this latest instalment. While the result doesn't resemble an In Flames album, there's something of that scene's truculent menace in its still notably South American vibes. The brooding, understated title-track is one such example, but longtime fans will be relieved to hear that it bleeds directly into I Am The Enemy, a furious thrash to the finish. Elsewhere, brutally percussive metal is balanced against interestingly off-piste ideas, all forming a satisfying and not untypical whole. We're probably safe to ignore the theme – something about gods turning out to be robots – but the music remains a force to be reckoned with.

DOWNLOAD: Phantom Self.
FOR FANS OF: Killswitch Engage, Soulfly.

STEVE BEEBEE

BEYOND THE BLACK

LOST IN FOREVER *(UDR)*

KKK

IF YOU WANT BLOOD… LOOK ELSEWHERE. IF YOU WANT MELODRAMA – RIGHT HERE

BEYOND THE Black are a pretty huge deal in their native Germany, and with the release of Lost In Forever they're setting their sights on the UK. Embracing the symphonic metal tag they are disinterested in shaking things up, and they've certainly got the whole soaring chorus thing down. However, it's hard to ignore the strong odour of cheese clinging to every track, and makes Against The World and Halo Of The Dark come off as comically overwrought. However, if that works for you, there's no arguing how ruthlessly catchy they are, and with vocalist Jennifer Haben's mighty larynx in charge they could very well be storming larger venues near you soon.

DOWNLOAD: Shine And Shade.
FOR FANS OF: Within Temptation, HIM.

DAN SLESSOR

CIRCLE OF DUST

MACHINES OF OUR DISGRACE *(FIXT)*

KKK

INDUSTRIAL METAL MASTERMIND MAKES BELATED RETURN AFTER 18 YEARS

THE VERY long time since Circle Of Dust's last record, 1998's Disengage, and this one have probably been more beneficial to its creator Klayton (aka Celldweller, aka Scott Albert) than his fans. So while technology and its effects on human behaviour have informed the title-track's discussion of the '*Narcissism we so easily embrace*', it's hard to get excited about an album that doesn't sound like it's embracing the world it dissects. And although the dusty synths and thrashy guitars of Humanarchy are well executed, they don't make for a revelatory experience for those that have been treated to seven albums by Ministry and six by Nine Inch Nails during those intervening years. This is therefore the musical equivalent of an analogue watch in a digital age. Perhaps, given its distrust of our slavishness to modern advances, that's the point?

DOWNLOAD: Machines Of Our Disgrace.
FOR FANS OF: Ministry, Nine Inch Nails.

JAMES HICKIE

ABRUPT UPHEAVAL. Dramatic, emotional homecomings. Hard-earned redemption. Somewhat oddly from a band most renowned for onstage japes and mosh-igniting music – **KILLSWITCH ENGAGE**'s recent history has provided one of modern metal's most dramatic arcs, captured here on **BEYOND THE FLAMES: HOME VIDEO VOLUME II (KKKK)**. Harnessing the theatre, their resident 'storyteller' Denise Korycki explores vocalist Jesse Leach's 2002 departure and the chaotic jubilance that's followed

ON THE STEREO

1 STEEL PANTHER – ANYTHING GOES
A moving, state of the world address sure to bring peace to the glo… Oh wait, sorry, it's just more metal smut. Also good.

2 EMMURE – RUSSIAN HOTEL AFTERMATH
Oh look, Emmure's new song is about as subtle as a punch from a gorilla. Lovely.

3 SEASONS – WHEN WE WERE YOUNG
Young Guns fan? Yeah? Well check out new Brit mob Seasons THIS INSTANT!

4 LIKE PACIFIC – DISTANT
Big, punchy pop-punk? From Canada? That's awesome? Tick, tick, and thrice tick.

5 CAN'T SWIM – YOUR CLOTHES
Judging by this slice of post-hardcore, your clothes are from 2001 and nerdy.

ENDLESS FLOODS

II *(DRY COUGH)*

KKKK

FRENCH TRIO ARE IN FINE FORM TO BRING YOU INTO THEIR WORLD OF DARKNESS

INITIALLY WHEN you look at the tracklisting you'll be surprised to see only three songs on II. However, once you delve into the droning doom of this French ensemble, you quickly realise it lasts longer than most albums with a dozen songs. On their latest offering, Endless Floods suck us into their world where they're seemingly hungry for death and destruction through the power of almighty guitar fuzz. Impasse sounds like it wants to destroy everything from the top down, as the sludgy riffs crash against your ears with all the force of a sea storm along the Cornish coast. Procession, meanwhile, sends you spiralling into a trance of pure doom. This album should come with a weather warning: expect floods of riffs!

DOWNLOAD: Impasse.
FOR FANS OF: Electric Wizard, Sleep.
JAMES HINGLE

RIDE FOR REVENGE

THY HORRENDOUS YEARNING
(HELLS HEADBANGERS)

KKK

FINISH ODDBALLS BRING THE BLACKENED SLUDGY DOOM ON FILTHY SIXTH ALBUM

LO-FI STILL too sparkly for you? Black metal too cheery and doom not aggressive enough? If your ears have pissed you off recently, why not subject them to the tortuous musical stylings of Ride For Revenge? It's true that their stripped-down primitivism is not technically jaw-dropping – there are lead breaks that sound like a rodent's running loose on the fretboard, and the vocals frequently sound like a pirate trying to dislodge a lump of fish gristle from the back of his throat. It's ugly and obstinate, but there are space-rock swirls, murky black metal blasts and a real sense of personality buried within. It's a horrible personality true, but that's sort of the point.

DOWNLOAD: Sexual Rhythm Of Death.
FOR FANS OF: Beherit, EyeHateGod.
PAUL TRAVERS

his 2012 return in this sprawling set's centrepiece 75-minute documentary. Aptly picking up where 2005's (Set This) World Ablaze left-off, this delivers an atmospheric, on-the-road chronicle of heavy music's great prodigal sons. Masterfully, though, it's a story fleshed out by a fascinating cast of peripheral characters – chief among them

joker-in-chief Adam Dutkiewicz, whose anarchic charm and Price Is Right-winning insight burn bright. If there's a complaint, it's the doc's distance from interim frontman Howard Jones. Sure, there's a classy sense of respect for the current Devil You Know singer, but his tenure feels like a blind-spot. We can't complain too much, mind, with the set generously rounded-out with music videos, outtakes, globetrotting live-footage and a six-track live EP recorded at Massachusetts' 2014 Monster Mosh. Value for money? Just a bit…

WORDS: SAM LAW

A Day To Remember

WHAT SEPARATES ME FROM YOU (VICTORY, 2010)

THE MOMENT OCALA'S FAVOURITE SONS BECAME CONTENDERS FOR WORLD DOMINATION

THIS WAS a crucial album for A Day To Remember. On previous outing, Homesick, they'd lobbed their popcore ball into the air, but now they had to smash it out of the park. With What Separates Me From You they knocked it through the stratosphere.

Saying that the heavy parts are heavier and the melodic parts more melodic is a cliché that countless bands with a new album to flog have trodden all over the carpet. In ADTR's case, however, they took those two extremes – the crunching breakdowns and sternum-rattling riffs; the gooey, impossibly infectious hooks – and nailed them to the mast like never before. The result was an album that alternately raged and caressed, often within the space of the same song. Opener and fan-favourite-in-the-making Sticks & Bricks ushered in a biting, bitter lyrical timbre (*'I am fuelled by all forms of failure / I paid the price / So I'll take what's mine'*) alongside a truly ferocious groove, while mega-tune All I Want was a more or less straight-up (if gravelly) pop-punk sugar rush.

It made ADTR not just huge, but one of the most trailblazing bands of the decade. As they prepare to slay Wembley, Jeremy McKinnon remembers their first big score.

THE ALBUM BOOKLET SAYS IT WAS MADE IN 'WADE STUDIO... THE BACK OF A BUS, WITH NO AC IN GERMANY, AND A CLOSET IN NEW JERSEY'. CARE TO ELABORATE?

JEREMY MCKINNON *(VOCALS)*: "It was written on tour and we had our engineer Andrew Wade, who's worked on pretty much everything we've ever done, come out. We demoed ideas in the back lounge of the bus, and as we were doing it we upgraded the equipment so if we really loved a take we could use it on the actual album. The studio part is self-explanatory, and the 'closet' was actually at the studio where the album was mixed, the House Of Loud. There was another band tracking, so one of the only rooms where we could finish our vocals was this tiny space. We ended up recording the back-up vocals for All Signs Point To Lauderdale in there."

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO WORK WITH NEW FOUND GLORY'S CHAD GILBERT AS A PRODUCER AGAIN?

"We'd put together a team that worked well together and made an album in Homesick that a lot of people liked. We were excited to keep that together, and Chad was more about the structure and coming in with ideas about maybe trying a riff a different way or saying, 'Is this vocal part as good as it could be?' He helped us get that polished pop-punk sound that we were always looking for. Who better to have for that than someone from New Found Glory?"

HOW BIG A DIFFERENCE DID THE ADDITION OF GUITARIST KEVIN SKAFF MAKE TO THE ALBUM?

"It was huge. Tom [Denney] actually quit at the beginning of the Homesick cycle. We recorded it and then he exited the band and then it just went, 'Boom!' The first UK tour we did on Homesick, Kevin was already on that, so when the majority of people found out about us it was with that line-up. It made it a seamless transition and we remain friends with Tom. He's appeared in videos and written on the records and we've kept everyone together."

DO YOU THINK THERE WAS SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT THIS ALBUM, LOOKING BACK?

"There was definitely something special about it. Homesick was the album that changed our lives. It was a night and day difference between the turnouts to our shows around the world so What Separates Me From You was the first album we got to put together when we had a real fanbase to impress. That drove us to push boundaries and what A Day To Remember could be. I think it still sounds great and I'm going to be proud of it forever. At least, I hope I will be!"

WORDS: PAUL TRAVERS

"WE RECORDED IN THE BACK OF THE BUS…"
JEREMY MCKINNON

DON'T MISS

MESHUGGAH

THE HEAVIEST OF BASTARDS ARE CHUGGING THEIR WAY INTO THE UK – BUT NOT BEFORE THEY TALK ABOUT HOW THEIR BAND BECAME A MEME…

ALRIGHT, MÅRTEN! WHAT CAN WE EXPECT WHEN MESHUGGAH HIT THE UK THIS MONTH?

MÅRTEN HAGSTRÖM (*GUITAR*): "Quite a lot, I hope! You're going to get us a bit warmed up after a run through the U.S. and mainland Europe. We always look forward to the UK – it's a good territory for us, but now, with the new album [the 5K-rated The Violent Sleep Of Reason] cruising along really well, we really can't wait. We're coming over with The Haunted, and it will be fun to visit Ireland for the first time in ages. We're pretty confident people will like what they see. We have always been after a psychological effect, where you throw things in different perspectives all the time. That's what makes people interpret, or misinterpret, the information… because it's so loosely grounded in what they normally hear."

IS IT STILL WEIRD HAVING DJENT BANDS CITE YOU AS A PRIMARY INFLUENCE?

"It's still fucking weird! Have they heard how we sound?! In hindsight, they make it look like we're an awesome band that have always had integrity, which is cool (*laughs*). I think it's pure stubbornness that got us where we are. We're not touring arenas or anything, but we make a living touring around the world – places like Japan, Iceland and the Faroe Islands. It's weird how many places we can play. I'm amazed that so many people find us inspiring, because we're not this big band – we've always been an awkward, acquired taste. But that's changed lately somehow, I don't know how it happened, I can't explain it. We don't sound like Nickelback, so why are we so successful?"

> **"I FIND THE MESHUGGAH MEMES HILARIOUS!"**
> **MÅRTEN HAGSTRÖM**

THERE'S A VERY ALIEN-LIKE QUALITY TO YOUR MUSIC. DO YOU BELIEVE IN ALIENS?

"Yes and no… I'm undetermined. I don't have any proof that aliens exist, but if you look really closely, there are many things to suggest they do. Here's the thing: in limitless space and time, there is *bound* to be other civilisations we don't know about – beings, amoebas, crustaceans, birds, gaseous forms, whatever the fuck. It's open to suggestion. The probability for us occurring at the same period of time in this vast limitless space I find rather unlikely. But I'm 110% sure other forms have existed in some point of time or another."

FINALLY, WHAT DID YOU MAKE OF THE LEONARDO DICAPRIO/MESHUGGAH 'FACE OF WALL STREET' VIDEO THAT WENT VIRAL… IT MUST HAVE MADE YOU LAUGH, SURELY?

"That's an awesome video, man! I loved it. I think if we make people feel creative in any way, shape or form, that can only be a good thing. So when those memes or videos come out, I'm kinda proud that there are people that have time to sit down and come up with these ideas. Like the DiCaprio thing, because after that some dude started a petition to get Leonardo down to do that song with us at Bonnaroo in 2014. And apparently thousands of people signed it… that felt surreal. I find the memes hilarious on a personal level – there are so many good ones. There's that human doll that walks around to Rational Gaze, plus the Wolf Of Wall Street one."

DATES: O2 Academy Bristol January 12, O2 Institute Birmingham 13, Nottingham Rock City 14, O2 ABC Glasgow 15, Belfast Limelight 17, Dublin Vicar Street 18, O2 Ritz Manchester 19, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 20. Support: The Haunted.

WORDS: AMIT SHARMA **PHOTO:** GETTY

YOUR WEEK!

THURSDAY *JANUARY 05*

LONDON Bare Knuckle Parade, Longy, The Alibi, 485C (Monarch)

SATURDAY *JANUARY 07*

DUBLIN Avenged Sevenfold, Disturbed, In Flames (3Arena)

GRIMSBY Evil Scarecrow (Yardbirds)

NEWCASTLE Servers, Enversa, Dunes (O2 Academy2 Newcastle)

TUESDAY *JANUARY 10*

DUBLIN Sabaton, Accept (Vicar Street)

GLASGOW Avenged Sevenfold, Disturbed, In Flames (SSE, Hydro)

MILTON KEYNES Devil You Know, ONI, Wearing Scars, Brutai (Craufurd Arms)

NOTTINGHAM The Bottom Line (Rescue Rooms)

CAN'T GET TO A GIG?

THEN HERE'S SOME OTHER STUFF TO KEEP YOUR EYES/EARS BUSY

IN KOMBAT! TWIN ATLANTIC VS. A DAY TO REMEMBER

KERRANG! TV – JANUARY 4, *6PM*

ADTR are used to Kombat after winning their battle with Victory Records. However, Twin Atlantic will be giving them No Sleep…

CHAD SMITH – RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS: THE K! INTERVIEW

KERRANG.COM

When he's not being Will Ferrell's doppelgänger, in his spare time Chad Smith is being a killer drummer in RHCP. We talk to him at The Academy of Contemporary Music and take a trip down memory lane with a music legend…

YOU ME AT SIX'S UK VS. U.S. SUPERSTARS: TOP 20

KERRANG! TV – JANUARY 9, *4PM*

Jheeeze, You Me At Six seem to be taking on everyone at the moment, first Josh Franceschi takes on ticket touts in the UK and now he wants the blood of some of the best rock bands from the other side of the pond. We know they voted Trump in as President, but not every American is bad, guys…

RIDER OF THE WEEK

BAND: Galactic Empire

If you strike them down, they'll become more powerful than you can possibly imagine. You've been warned…

GALACTIC EMPIRE

LIST OF DEMANDS

Please note: All items within this list of Lord Vader's demands are mandatory. Those who have not met this list to the letter in the past were not given a chance to fail him again. Consider this your first and final warning.

1. Galactic Empire's dressing room must be no smaller than 20' x 15'.

2. Venue must have three reclining arm chairs, preferably from the SkyMall catalogue. One each for Lord Vader, Bass Commander and Boba Sett.

3. Shadow Ranger and Red Guard must be supplied with a couch that can seat two comfortably. This couch can be from IKEA, eBay or a generous neighbour. Their needs are a lower priority.

4. Venue must provide the best and fastest available dry-cleaning service. The Empire's robes and armour must be returned in pristine condition no later than one hour before show time.

5. There must be one coffee table in the centre of the band's dressing room with a single bowl full of only black and red Skittles. NOT M&M's. Specifically Skittles. Please note that grape Skittles are NOT black Skittles. Contact your local supplier and tell them you require a shipment for Lord Vader. They'll know what to do.

6. Dressing room must have enough electrical outlets to charge the band's various electronic devices (phone, iPod, Zune, Walkman, Tamagotchi, pager, etc.)

7. Dressing room must have one 60" 4K television with satellite hook-up and TiVo. Saved on the TiVo must be the most recent three episodes of Spike TV's Ink Master and the latest Lifetime original movie.

8. Dressing room must be 73°F exactly. This is easy to overlook. Make sure that does not happen.

9. A table complete with various meats, cheeses and tasty treats such as Twizzlers, Oreos and Butterscotch Krimpets must be placed at the entrance of the dressing room. Please note that Mr. Sett has a severe gluten allergy, so all tasty treats displayed must also feature their gluten-free counterparts. It is imperative that we keep the Bounty Drummer regular for his performance.

10. Finally, the dressing room MUST contain a full-sized refrigerator, fully stocked with blue milk. It reminds Lord Vader of home.

MY FIRST GIG

WHO: BECK, DARIEN LAKE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, JUNE 9, 1998

THE SUM 41 FRONTMAN MANAGED TO AVOID GETTING A FAT LIP AT HIS FIRST SHOW – INSTEAD IT GAVE HIM MOTIVATION…

DERYCK WHIBLEY, SUM 41

"I used to go to a lot of local shows, but not so many concerts because I didn't really have a lot of money back then. That being said, probably the first proper concert I went to was Beck when I was about 17. I was able to go because at that age I had a manager and he was really well connected in the music industry, so he was always getting tickets. I saw Beck on the Odelay tour, with Elliott Smith and Ben Folds Five opening up, which was a *really* good line-up. It was one of those life-changing shows for me, because it was such a *show*. It wasn't just a guy performing songs that you like, which is all I'd ever known because I'd only ever seen local punk-rock shows. I have so many tapes of Sum 41 around that time trying to do that sort of stuff in our shows, bringing trampolines and a basketball net onstage, and lighting fireworks. After that show, I changed from being a typical punk-rocker to wanting to do something that had more spectacle to it."

GENERAL ADMISSION

WORDS: JAMES HICKIE

MY VENUE

THINK TANK?

NEWCASTLE

SCOTSWOOD RD, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, NE1 4EP

STEVE JONES, VENUE MANAGER

HEY STEVE! TELL US HOW IT ALL STARTED FOR YOU AT THINK TANK?...

"I joined Think Tank? in December 2013. I had previously managed the infamous North East rock bar Trillians for a number of years but jumped at the chance to join the Tokyo Industries after Trillians closed due to their parent company going under. But, it's great to see it re-opened now."

WHICH PART DO YOU PLAY WITHIN THE VENUE?

"I'm the venue manager. My day-to-day role is working closely with SSD Concerts who hold the live diary for the venue. Myself and the house engineer Phill Richardson are there most days making sure things work and the promoters and reps have everything they need to put on a successful show. Despite being more operational-based these days I still book shows occasionally. Once you've done it, it's something you will always go back to – addictive, stressful fun!"

IS IT FUN WORKING AT A MUSIC VENUE LIKE THINK TANK??

"It's something I have always done. I have done this in varying capacities for around 20 years now. It's a brilliant job and as anyone who does it knows, we are very lucky. Getting paid to do something you love is rare so I never take it for granted. It's long hours and can sometimes be a bit stressful but the good always outweighs the bad."

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT SOME OF THE LEGENDARY ROCK GIGS TO HAPPEN THERE?

"Highlights have to include Sick Of It All – great guys who I've booked for a number of years. The shows are always carnage but good clean fun. 2016 highlights include Municipal Waste, which was a bit mental – we had people calling up the day before checking they could bring inflatables! In a low-ceiling, 250-capacity venue that got silly very quickly. A few weeks ago Astroid Boys sold out the venue for the third time with a show that kicked off so much, in a good way, that the floor had to be repaired."

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT COMING IN 2017 THAT YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO?

"Going into 2017 we already have over 70 confirmed shows for the start of the year. In 2016, we did 170 shows covering all sorts of music genres, but the rock, pop-punk and hardcore shows always have a special buzz for me. There's already some shows that stand out for me personally – I'm very much looking forward to Trash Talk and Pulled Apart By Horses. There's a few other belters coming but they aren't announced yet, so I'm having to keep them to myself and the team for now. I am very happy with the way 2017 is shaping up already, though."

FINALLY, WHAT CHALLENGES ARE YOU FACING GOING INTO THE NEW YEAR?

"Like all venues the trading climate is tough. Costs for bands to tour are going up, so ticket prices and drink prices have to follow and people are having to be more selective. I feel we are very lucky as we have a wide variety of stuff, and the guys at SSD Concerts do a brilliant job. So, as long as we keep up the consistency and quality I think we will be here for a long time to come."

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buy your tickets from www.aloud.com

BOOKING NOW

A DAY TO REMEMBER
Cardiff Motorpoint Arena January 22, Glasgow SSE Hydro 23, Birmingham Barclaycard Arena 25, London SSE Arena Wembley 27, Leeds Arena 28. Support: Neck Deep, Moose Blood.

AGAINST THE CURRENT
Brighton Haunt March 8, Norwich Epic Studios 9, O2 Academy2 Liverpool 10, Edinburgh Liquid Room 12, Sheffield Leadmill 13, Cardiff Globe 14, London Bush Hall 17.

ALL TIME LOW
London Eventim Apollo March 10, Cardiff Great Hall March 11, Southampton Guildhall 13, Cambridge Corn Exchange 14, O2 Academy Leeds 15, O2 Academy Birmingham 16, Liverpool Guild Of Students 18, Belfast Ulster Hall 19, Dublin Olympia 20, O2 Academy Bristol 22, O2 Apollo Manchester 23, O2 Academy Sheffield 24, O2 Academy Newcastle 25, Edinburgh Corn Exchange 27, O2 Academy Glasgow 28, Norwich Nick Rayns LCR 30, London O2 Academy Brixton 31. Support: SWMRS, Waterparks.

ANTHRAX
O2 Institute Birmingham February 9, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 10, O2 Academy Bristol 11, Nottingham Rock City 13, Manchester Academy 14, Glasgow Barrowland 15, Newcastle University 16, Norwich UEA 17.

APOCALYPTICA
Manchester Bridgewater Hall February 27, Edinburgh Queen's Hall 28, London Royal Festival Hall March 1.

ATTILA
Glasgow Garage April 1, Leeds Key Club 2, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 3, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 4, Bristol Marble Factory 5, Manchester Academy II 6, London Camden Electric Ballroom 7, Southampton Engine Rooms 9.

AVENGED SEVENFOLD
Dublin 3Arena January 7, Glasgow SSE Hydro 10, Newcastle Metro Radio Arena 12, Birmingham Genting Arena 13, Sheffield Arena 15, Manchester Arena 16, Nottingham Motorpoint Arena 18, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 19, London O2 Arena 21 – 22. Support: Disturbed, In Flames.

BLACK PEAKS
Oxford Bullingdon January 24, Bournemouth Sound Circus 25, London Tufnell Park Dome 26, Belfast Limelight 28, Dublin Workmans Club 29, Glasgow King Tut's 30, Newcastle Cluny 31, Manchester Ruby Lounge February 1, Nottingham Rock City Basement 2, Cheltenham Frog & Fiddle 3, Leicester Firebug 4, O2 Academy3 Birmingham 5. Support: Tigercub, Two Glass Eyes, Employed To Serve, Bad Sign (certain dates only).

BLACK SABBATH
Manchester Arena January 22, Glasgow SSE Hydro Arena 24, Leeds Arena 26, O2 Arena London 29 and 31, Birmingham Genting Arena February 2 and 4. Support: Rival Sons.

BLINK-182
Cardiff Motorpoint Arena July 3, Nottingham Motorpoint Arena 4, Leeds First Direct Arena 5, Birmingham Barclaycard Arena 7, Newcastle Metro Radio Arena 9, Glasgow SSE Hydro 11, Manchester Arena 14, Liverpool Echo Arena 15, Bournemouth International Centre 17, London O2 Arena 19 – 20.

BLOODSTOCK FESTIVAL
Line-up: Amon Amarth, Blind Guardian, Testament, Possessed, Hatebreed, Hell, Whitechapel, Decapitated, Brujeria, Obituary, Skindred, Annihilator, Municipal Waste. Derbyshire Catton Park August 10 – 13.

BRITISH SUMMER TIME
Line-up: Green Day. London Hyde Park July 1.

BURY TOMORROW
O2 Institute Birmingham February 14, O2 Ritz Manchester 15, Glasgow Garage 16, Newcastle Riverside 17, Leeds Stylus 19, Nottingham Rock City 20, CardiffY Plas 21, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 22. Support: Crossfaith.

COUNTERFEIT
Leeds Key Club April 18, Manchester Academy III 19, O2 Academy2 Newcastle 20, Glasgow Stereo 21, Nottingham Rock City Basement 22, O2 Academy3 Birmingham 23, Bristol Fleece 25, London Camden Underworld 26, Southampton Joiners 28, Brighton Haunt 29.

CREEPER
Manchester Academy II March 25, Glasgow Garage 26, Newcastle University 27, Leeds Stylus 28, London Camden Electric Ballroom 30, Southampton 1865 31, O2 Institute2 Birmingham April 1, Cardiff TramShed 2.

DEAF HAVANA
O2 Ritz Manchester February 17, O2 ABC Glasgow 18, O2 Academy Bristol 20, O2 Institute Birmingham 21, Norwich Nick Rayns LCR UEA 23, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 24.

DEFTONES
London Alexandra Palace May 5, O2 Apollo Manchester 6, Glasgow SECC 7. Support: AFI.

DESERTFEST
Line-up: Turbonegro, Samsara Blues Experiment, The Picturebooks, Satan's Satyrs, Yuri Gagarin, Vodun, Mammoth Storm, Elephant Tree, Sleep. London Camden April 28 – 30.

THE DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN
Norwich Waterfront January 18, Glasgow QMU 19, Manchester Academy II 20, Nottingham Rock City 21, O2 Institute Birmingham 22, Cardiff TramShed 23, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 25, Brighton Concorde II 26.

DOWNLOAD FESTIVAL
Line-up: System Of A Down, Biffy Clyro, Aerosmith, Slayer, Prophets Of Rage, Rob Zombie, AFI, Five Finger Death Punch, Of Mice & Men, Sleeping With Sirens, Fozzy, Every Time I Die, Simple Plan, Motionless In White, The Story So Far, Pierce The Veil, Alter Bridge, Airbourne, Opeth, Clutch, Sum 41, Good Charlotte, Issues, Ministry, Mastodon, DevilDriver, Coheed And Cambria, Four Year Strong, Knuckle Puck, WAKRAT, Basement, The One Hundred, Crown The Empire, The Dead Daisies, Greywind, Astroid Boys, Exodus, Lost Society, God Damn, Red Fang. Derby Donington Park June 9 – 11.

EMP PERSISTENCE TOUR
Line-up: Suicidal Tendencies, Agnostic Front. London O2 Forum Kentish Town January 29.

EVAROSE
O2 Academy Oxford March 4, Southampton Joiners 5, Newcastle Jumpin' Jacks 6, Dundee Redd Suite 7, Glasgow Broadcast 8, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 9, Manchester Zoo 10, London O2 Academy2 Islington 11. Support: Veridian.

FOUR YEAR STRONG
Bristol Fleece February 14, Manchester Academy II 15, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 16, London Camden KOKO 17. Support: Chunk! No, Captain Chunk!, Boston Manor, Homebound.

FRANK CARTER & THE RATTLESNAKES
Norwich Waterfront March 16, Manchester Academy II 17, Newcastle Riverside 18, Glasgow Saint Luke's 19, Belfast Oh Yeah Music Centre 21, Dublin Academy II 22, Leeds Stylus 24, Birmingham Asylum 25, Cardiff Globe 26, Exeter Phoenix 27, Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms 29, London Camden KOKO 30.

GHOST
Norwich UEA March 24, Cardiff Great Hall 25, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 26, O2 Academy Leeds 28, O2 ABC Glasgow 29, O2 Apollo Manchester 31, O2 Academy Birmingham April 1, Brighton Dome 2.

GREEN DAY
Leeds First Direct Arena February 5, Manchester Arena 6, London O2 Arena 8, Glasgow Bellahouston Park July 4. Support: The Interrupters (February 5 – 8), Rancid (July 4).

GUNS N' ROSES
London Stadium June 16 – 17.

HAND MADE FESTIVAL
Line-up: Twin Atlantic, Pulled Apart By Horses, Tigercub, Muncie Girls, Puppy. O2 Academy Leicester April 29 – 30.

HEAVY SCOTLAND
Line-up: Arch Enemy, Dyscarnate, Sodomized Cadaver, Disposable, Behemoth, Grave, Shiraz Lane, Centrilia. Edinburgh Corn Exchange April 1 – 2.

HELLIONS
Brighton Sticky Mike's February 21, Nottingham Red Room 22, Glasgow Garage Attic 23, Newcastle Jumpin' Jacks 24, Leeds Key Club 25, Southampton Joiners 26, Plymouth Underground 27, Cardiff Fuel 28. Support: Acres.

JUST ANNOUNCED

THE HUNNA
Sheffield Leadmill January 14, O2 Ritz Manchester 15, Newcastle Riverside 16, Edinburgh Liquid Room 17, Leeds Stylus University 18, Nottingham Rock City 20, O2 Academy Leicester 21, O2 Institute Birmingham 23, Bristol SWX 24, O2 Academy2 Oxford 25, London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire 26.

IMPERICON FESTIVAL
Line-up: Thy Art Is Murder, Being As An Ocean, Miss May I, In Hearts Wake. Manchester Academy April 17.

IRON MAIDEN
Nottingham Motorpoint Arena May 4, Manchester Arena 8, Sheffield Arena 10, Leeds First Direct Arena 11, Newcastle Metro Radio Arena 14, Glasgow SSE Hydro 16, Aberdeen GE Oil & Gas Arena 17, Liverpool Echo Arena 20, Birmingham Barclaycard Arena 21, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 24, London O2 Arena 27. Support: Shinedown.

JAPANDROIDS
O2 Institute Birmingham April 28, Glasgow Garage 20, Leeds Stylus May 1, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 2, Manchester Gorilla 4, Brighton Concorde II 5, London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire 6.

KISS
Glasgow SSE Hydro May 27, Birmingham Barclaycard Arena 28, Manchester Arena 30, London O2 Arena 31.

LOWER THAN ATLANTIS
Norwich UEA March 9, O2 Academy Birmingham 10, Manchester Academy 11, O2 Academy Leeds 13, O2 Academy Newcastle 14, O2 ABC Glasgow 15, London O2 Academy Brixton 17, Cardiff Great Hall 18. Support: Young Guns, Hands Like Houses, ROAM.

MALLORY KNOX
O2 Academy Bristol March 20, Cardiff TramShed 21, Norwich UEA 22, O2 Institute Birmingham 24, Sheffield Leadmill 25, Cambridge Corn Exchange 26, Aberdeen Garage 28, Edinburgh Liquid Room 29, Newcastle University 31, O2 Academy Liverpool April 1, Portsmouth Pyramids 2, O2 Academy Oxford 4, London Camden KOKO 5 – 6. Support: Lonely The Brave, Fatherson.

MAYHEM
London Camden Electric Ballroom March 29, Manchester Club Academy 30, Dublin Academy 31, Glasgow Lords Of The Land April 1.

THE MENZINGERS
Southampton Talking Heads April 18, London Camden KOKO 19, Bristol Bierkeller 20, Manchester Academy II 21, Glasgow Oran Mor 22, Derby Venue 23, Norwich Epic Studios 24. Support: The Flatliners.

MESHUGGAH
O2 Academy2 Bristol January 12, O2 Institute Birmingham 13, Nottingham Rock City 14, O2 ABC Glasgow 15, Belfast Limelight 17, Dublin Academy 10, O2 Ritz Manchester 19, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 20.

MONSTER TRUCK
Belfast Limelight II March 13, Dublin Academy II 14, Bristol Marble Factory 15, O2 Institute Birmingham 17, Manchester Club Academy 18, Glasgow King Tut's 19, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 21, London Camden Electric Ballroom 22.

OATHBREAKER
London Camden Underworld January 20, Glasgow Broadcast 22, Belfast Voodoo 23, Dublin Grand Social 24, Birmingham Flapper 25, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 26, Manchester Star & Garter 27, Brighton Green Door Store 28, Bristol Exchange 29.

PARKWAY DRIVE
London O2 Academy Brixton April 8, Nottingham Rock City 9, O2 Academy Leeds 10, Cardiff University Great Hall 11. Support: Asking Alexandria.

PINEGROVE
Bristol Exchange February 21, London King's Cross Scala 22, Manchester Deaf Institute 23, Glasgow Stereo 24, Birmingham Mama Roux's 25, Cambridge Portland Arms 26, Norwich Epic Studios 28, Leeds Brudenell Social Club March 1, Brighton Haunt 2.

THE PRETTY RECKLESS
Nottingham Rock City January 19, O2 Institute Birmingham 20, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 21, O2 ABC Glasgow 23, O2 Ritz Manchester 24.

PRIMUS
London Camden Roundhouse June 20.

PWR BTTM
Dublin Workmans Club April 10, Manchester Deaf Institute 11, Sheffield Harley 12, Birmingham Hare & Hounds 13, Glasgow CCA 15, Bristol Exchange 16, Brighton Haunt 17, London Islington Garage 18.

THE ATARIS
Bristol Thekla January 24, Milton Keynes Craufurd Arms 25, Huddersfield Parish 26, Manchester Sound Control 27, Aberdeen Tunnels 28, Edinburgh Sneaky Pete's 29, Glasgow Stereo 31, Nottingham Rescue Rooms February 1, Basingstoke Sanctuary 2, Cheltenham Frog & Fiddle 3, Bridgwater Cobblestones 4, Cardiff Globe 5, London Camden Dingwalls 6.

BROKEN TEETH
Plymouth Underground January 20, Cheltenham Frog & Fiddle 21.

CAMDEN ROCKS FESTIVAL
Line-up: The Damned, Orange Goblin, Ruts DC, Hey! Hello!, Massmatiks, Fizzy Blood, The Franklys, The Kut and more! Camden @ various venues June 3.

CHILDREN OF BODOM
Manchester Academy II March 11, London O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire 12.

CREEPER
Support added: Puppy.

DEAFHEAVEN
London Camden KOKO April 21, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 22, Glasgow St. Luke's 23, Manchester Gorilla 24, O2 Academy Birmingham 25, Cardiff Tramshed 26. Support: Youth Code.

DECADE
Birmingham Asylum March 3, Leicester Cookie 4, Newcastle Think Tank? 5, Glasgow Audio 6, Leeds Key Club 7, Manchester Star & Garter 8, London Boston Music Rooms 9, Nottingham Rock City Basement 10, Bath Moles 11.

OUTBREAK FEST
Line-up: Turning Point. Leeds Canal Mills April 29 – 30.

PERIPHERY
O2 Ritz Manchester May 19, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 20. Support: The Contortionist, Destrage.

VIMIC
London Camden Electric Ballroom March 28, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 29, Manchester Academy2 30.

THE VIRGINMARYS
Nottingham Rock City Basement March 15, O2 Institute3 Birmingham 16, Glasgow Cathouse 17, Newcastle Think Tank? 18, Manchester Gorilla 19, London Borderline 21, Tunbridge Wells Forum 22, Cardiff Clwb Ifor Bach 23, Leeds Key Club 24.

PHOTO: CHRIS CASEY

ALICE COOPER

Leeds First Direct Arena November 11, Glasgow SSE Hydro 12, Birmingham Barclaycard Arena 14, Manchester Arena 15, London SSE Arena Wembley 16. Support: The Mission, The Tubes.

RAMBLIN' MAN FAIR
Line-up: ZZ Top, Monster Truck, Jared James Nichols, Kansas and more. Maidstone Mote Park July 29 – 30.

READING & LEEDS FESTIVAL
Line-up: Muse, At The Drive-In, Architects, Against The Current, While She Sleeps. Reading Richfield Avenue, Leeds Bramham Park August 25 – 27.

REAL FRIENDS
Manchester Club Academy April 6, Birmingham Asylum 7, Newcastle Riverside 9, Glasgow Saint Luke's 10, Leeds Stylus 11, Bristol Thekla 13, Norwich Epic Studios 14, Southampton Engine Rooms 15, London Electric Ballroom Camden 16.

RITCHIE BLACKMORE'S RAINBOW
Manchester Arena June 22, Glasgow SSE Hydro 25, Birmingham Genting Arena 28.

ROYAL REPUBLIC
Glasgow Garage March 30, Manchester Academy II 31, London Camden Electric Ballroom April 1.

SABATON
Dublin Vicar Street January 10, O2 Academy Glasgow 11, O2 Apollo Manchester 13, London O2 Academy Brixton 14. Support: Accept.

SEAWAY
Southampton Joiners January 24, Bristol Fleece 25, Leeds Key Club 26, Glasgow Stereo 27, O2 Academy2 Newcastle 29, Manchester Sound Control 30, Nottingham Rock City Basement 31, Norwich Epic Studios February 1, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 2, London Camden Underworld 3.

SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL
Line-up: Enter Shikari, Don Broco, Bowling For Soup, Reel Big Fish, Less Than Jake, Cute Is What We Aim For, We The Kings. Birmingham NEC May 27, Leeds City Centre 28, Hatfield Forum 29.

STATE CHAMPS
Southampton Engine Rooms March 9, O2 Academy Bristol 10, O2 Ritz Manchester 11, Newcastle Riverside 13, Glasgow Garage 14, Leeds Beckett University 16, O2 Institute Birmingham 17, London O2 Kentish Town Forum 18.

STONE FREE FESTIVAL
Line-up: Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow. London O2 Arena June 17 – 18.

SUM 41
O2 Academy Birmingham February 24, Manchester Academy 25, O2 Academy Leeds 26, Glasgow Barrowlands 28, London O2 Academy Brixton March 2, O2 Academy Bristol 3, Nottingham Rock City, O2 Guildhall Southampton 6.

TAKING BACK SUNDAY
O2 ABC Glasgow February 14, O2 Ritz Manchester 15, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 16, Nottingham Rock City 17, Norwich UEA 18. Support: Frank Iero And The Patience.

TECH FEST
Line-up: The Black Dahlia Murder, Obscura, Aborted, The Arusha Accord, Hacktivist, Ingested, The Algorithm, Oceans Ate Alaska, Dyscarnate, Carcer City, Exist Immortal, Sarah Longfield, Alaska, The Fine Constant, Within Destruction, Aenimus, Toska, The Royal, Hieroglyph, FRCTRD, Fraktions, Nycosia. Newark Showground July 6 – 11.

TOGETHERFEST
Line-up: Youth Of Today, American Nightmare, Trash Talk, Vanishing Life, Wolf Down. London Electric Ballroom Camden February 25.

TOUCHÉ AMORÉ
Brighton Haunt February 15, Bristol Fleece 17, Manchester Sound Control 18, O2 Academy2 Newcastle 19, Glasgow Stereo 20, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 21, O2 Academy2 Birmingham 22, London O2 Academy Islington 23.

TRIVIUM
Dublin Academy February 11, Belfast Limelight 12, O2 Institute Birmingham 14, Manchester Academy 15, Glasgow Barrowland 16, London Camden Roundhouse 17, Nottingham Rock City 18.

UNDERØATH
O2 Ritz Manchester May 1, Dublin Academy 2, Nottingham Rock City 3, O2 ABC Glasgow 4, O2 Academy Newcastle 5, O2 Institute Birmingham 6, Leeds Beckett University 8, London O2 Forum Kentish Town 9, Norwich Nick Rayns LCR UEA 10, O2 Academy Bristol 11.

WHILE SHE SLEEPS
York Fibbers April 20, London Tufnell Park Dome 22 – 23, Brighton Concorde II 25, Southampton Talking Heads 26, O2 Academy2 Oxford 27, Bristol Fleece 28, Manchester Academy II 29, Dublin Academy May 1, Belfast OhYeah Centre 2, Liverpool Arts Club 3, Stoke Sugarmill 5, Norwich Waterfront 6, Newcastle Riverside 8, Glasgow Garage 9, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 10, Birmingham Asylum 12, Leeds Stylus 13.

WITH CONFIDENCE
London Underworld Camden February 24, Southampton Joiners 25, Bristol Exchange 26, Leeds Key Club 28, Manchester Sound Control March 1, Glasgow King Tut's 2, Newcastle Think Tank? 3, Nottingham Basement 4, Birmingham Asylum 5, Norwich Epic Studious 6. Support: Broadside, Safe To Say, Milestones.

THE WONDER YEARS
Leeds Uni Stylus January 31, London Camden KOKO February 1, O2 Institute Birmingham 3, Glasgow QMU 4, O2 Ritz Manchester 5. Support: PUP.

YOU ME AT SIX
O2 Academy Newcastle April 3, Plymouth Pavilions 5, Blackburn King George's Hall 6, Doncaster Dome 7, O2 Academy Birmingham 10, Bournemouth Solent Hall 11, Glasgow SECC 13, Cardiff Motorpoint Arena 14, London Alexandra Palace 15.

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+ SVALBARD & GRAVE LINES
TICKETS £15.50 ADV / DOORS 18:00

TUE 24 JAN
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SUN 29 JAN
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+ IN EVIL HOUR & THE FOAMERS
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MON 30 JAN
LEFTÖVER CRACK
+ FAINTEST IDEA, PINTS & ROTTEN FOXES
TICKETS £15.00 ADV / DOORS 19:00

MON 6 FEB
DOYLE
+ GENERATION GRAVEYARD
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MON 13 FEB
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+ SILENT THIEVES
TICKETS £14.00 ADV / DOORS 19:00

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THE FACES THAT WILL RULE 2017!

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GO ON... WHAT'S YOUR HOT BAND TIP FOR 2017?

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PHOTOGRAPHERS: David Bergman, Lindsey Byrnes, Chris Casey, Ian Collins, Carrie Davenport, Andy Ford, Andy Gallagher, Paul Harries, Jeremy Harris, Lisa Johnson, Andrew Lipovsky, Ashley Maile, Tom Martin, Martin Philbey, Andrew Timms, Neil Visel, Dave Willis.

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SUITS

MARKETING
MARKETING MANAGER: Ally Johnstone
SYNDICATION INTERNATIONAL CONTENT EXECUTIVE: Ryan Chambers (01733 468561 Ryan.chambers@bauermedia.co.uk)
IFA (+31 20 664 5324 Info@ifa-amsterdam.com)

EVENTS
EVENT DIRECTOR: Helen Scott
SENIOR EVENT PRODUCER: Emily Bramfitt
EVENTS EXECUTIVE: Phoebe James
ACCOUNT MANAGER: Sianne Young

ADVERTISING
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GROUP MD ADVERTISING: Abby Carvosso
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BAUER

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All views and opinions expressed by our interviewees are those of the artist or band and not necessarily Kerrang!'s.

THE ULTIMATE
ROCKSTAR TEST

AHREN STRINGER
THE AMITY AFFLICTION

IF HE TELLS YOU HE KNOWS SOMEWHERE TO CRASH FOR THE NIGHT, WALK AWAY AS FAST AS YOU CAN…

ON ROCK'N'ROLL...

WHAT'S THE STUPIDEST THING YOU'VE DONE WHILE DRUNK?

"One of my lowest points was the first time we ever played in Melbourne. I didn't know where I was and I'd lost everyone after the show. It turned out they were in the same pub I'd just left because I thought they'd all gone. My phone was dead, I had no money, so I just gave up and thought, 'All I can do now is find somewhere to sleep.' I slept in an alley, in a wheelie bin, then woke up in the morning and rode the trains until I saw a McDonald's I recognised."

WHAT'S THE SICKEST YOU'VE BEEN AND STILL PLAYED A SHOW?

"It's probably [our last] tour to be honest. As soon as someone gets sick it spreads like wildfire and we're all pretty bad at the moment. Couple that with a ripping hangover and you're sweating out a lot of demons onstage, but it's probably the best thing for you."

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ARRESTED ON TOUR?

"Not on a tour, but I've been arrested for being a public nuisance, drunk and disorderly, pissing in public and all that sort of scallywag behaviour. Nothing too serious, but I have spent a few overnighters in the cells. In Australia it's very much frowned upon to urinate in public and they'll keep you overnight for that, especially if you're under the influence, which usually is the case."

You'll probably find urinating in public is 'frowned upon' everywhere, Ahren…

FAILS AND F' UPS...

HAVE YOU EVER HACKED A BANDMATE WITH YOUR BASS?

"Oh yeah, I did a silly move and didn't know Dan [Brown, guitar] was behind me. I popped him right in the side of the head with a bass peg and it was pissing out blood all over the stage. I've never really been injured myself, but I'm a danger to others. They call me the silent assassin."

EMBARRASSING THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO YOU ONSTAGE?

"One time in America I slipped over and landed on the drum riser and I couldn't really find my way back up. It was such a slippery stage I couldn't find my feet. That's always the most embarrassing thing – doing your job up there and finding yourself suddenly eating shit in front of the entire crowd."

Okay, we're now picturing you as an upturned tortoise

"THEY CALL ME THE SILENT ASSASSIN…"
AHREN STRINGER

LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH & FAMOUS...

WHAT'S THE STRANGEST THING A FAN'S EVER ASKED YOU?

"Usually they just ask for a photo, which is great, but sometimes they'll ask if they can have my hat or my sunglasses or whatever I'm wearing at the time. I'll say, 'Umm, no, they're mine.' It's an odd thing to ask anyone. I'll chat and I'll pose for a photo, but I'm not going to give you my $200 Marc Jacobs sunglasses."

WHO'S THE MOST FAMOUS PERSON YOU'VE HUNG OUT WITH?

"I didn't party with him but we met Jared Leto when Thirty Seconds To Mars were playing Soundwave. We were staying in the same hotel and I was super-wasted, so the only thing I could think of to say to him was, 'You're Jared Leto!' He was like, 'Yes, yes I am.' I thought: 'Well, I'm an idiot.'"

Accosting does not count as 'hanging out with'

ON THE HYPOTHETICAL...

IF YOU COULD GUARANTEE FIVE YEARS OF HUGE SUCCESS OR 20 YEARS OF MODERATE SUCCESS, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

"I'd probably go for the five years, to be honest. Then I'd retire comfortably and go on with the next chapter of my life. The biggest show we've ever played, people-wise, would be Hellfest in France, but we have played our own headliner to about 10,000 people in Brisbane. I like the intimate feelings of the small shows, but the big, overwhelming ones are a lot of fun as well."

IF YOU COULD INSTANTLY LEARN ANY SKILL, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

"Like in The Matrix? It would be hard to beat flying, really, wouldn't it? Or just being able to dodge bullets and freeze time like Neo in The Matrix. Not that I'm being shot at on a regular basis…"

Good to hear it…

SPIRITUAL HEADMELTER...

IF REINCARNATION IS REAL, ARE YOU TAKING A STEP FORWARD OR BACK IN YOUR NEXT LIFE?

"I think I'm a pretty good person, so I think it would be a step up. That's something that everyone should live their life by – be good and you'll get it back."

Wise words, especially from a man who sleeps in wheelie bins

THE VERDICT

DUNNO WHY BUT WE THOUGHT AMITY WERE SENSIBLE. HOW ABSOLUTELY WRONG WE WERE

SCORE 95%

THE LEADERBOARD

1	***AL JOURGENSEN*** *MINISTRY*	100%
2	***ALICE COOPER***	99%
3	***BEN BRUCE*** *ASKING ALEXANDRIA*	98%
4	***AHREN STRINGER*** *THE AMITY AFFLICTION*	95%
5	***GRIFFIN DICKINSON*** *SHVPES*	93%
6	***GENE SIMMONS*** *KISS*	93%
7	***JOEL O'KEEFFE*** *AIRBOURNE*	93%
8	***DAVEY HAVOK*** *AFI*	92%
9	***FRANK CARTER*** *FRANK CARTER & THE RATTLESNAKES*	92%
10	***CHAD NICEFIELD*** *WILSON*	91%
11	***TAYLOR HAWKINS*** *FOO FIGHTERS/KOTA*	91%
12	***TUOMAS HOLOPAINEN*** *NIGHTWISH*	70%
13	***CHRIS ROBERTSON*** *BLACK STONE CHERRY*	52%
14	***EDDY BREWERTON*** *MOOSE BLOOD*	31%

WORDS: PAUL TRAVERS PICTURE: MAX FAIRCLOUGH

Fat Lip FEST

SATURDAY 29TH JULY 2017

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